FOOTBALL: Eddies hang on to beat Bears

Page B1

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Dowagiac News

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Cass terminates contract with county administrator

SUBMITTED

CASSOPOLIS — The Cass County Board of Commissioners unanimously voted Thursday, Sept. 4 to part ways with Patrick Jordan following an investigation into allegations of derogatory comments made in the workplace.

Jordan was placed on paid administrative leave on Friday, Aug. 15, after the Board of Commissioners received reports that Jordan had made discriminatory comments about two minority groups. As permitted by the Open Meetings Act, Jordan asked that the matter be discussed publicly rather than in closed session and admitted to making the comments.

JORDAN

Foster Swift, the County's legal counsel, facilitated the investigation and reported its findings to the Board of Commissioners.

"The investigation made clear that Mr. Jordan's actions violated the standards we expect of our county leadership, and termination with cause was deemed appropriate," said Board Chair Jeremiah Jones. "This decision underscores our commitment to accountability and to maintaining a workplace that is respectful and professional."

Jordan began serving as the County Administrator on June 11, following a rigorous search and interview process led by Michigan Leadership Institute, an organization specializing in hiring county administrators and school superintendents. Jordan had previously served in governmental leadership roles in Michigan, Texas and Alaska.

Finance Director Jennifer Rentfrow was appointed to serve as interim administrator during the investigation and will continue to serve in the position as the county searches for a permanent administrator. Next steps regarding this search will be shared on the county's website, casscountymi.org.

Photo provided by Eileen Crouse

The Wounded Minnow building, located at 234 and 236 S. Front St., is one of three redevelopment projects in the state receiving support from the bipartisan Revitalization and Placemaking program.

Grant to help revitalize historic building

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — A new redevelopment project in the City of Dowagiac is moving forward.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer joined the Michigan Economic Development Corporation Thursday to announce that the Wounded Minnow building, located at 234 and 236 S. Front St., is one of three redevelopment projects in the state receiving support from the bipartisan Revitalization and Placemaking program.

Together, the projects will generate a total capital investment of more than $9.76 million in the state while activating vacant properties and creating residential density in the communities' downtowns.

The Wounded Minnow building will be redeveloped to create 10 new apartments and reconfigure the commercial space occupied by the Wounded Minnow Saloon. The project will fully activate the upper floors of the Wounded Minnow Building, which is the largest historic property in the main downtown corridor of Dowagiac.

Supported by $1,431,574 in RAP grant funding, the redevelopment project will bring a total anticipated capital investment of $3,559,241. Developers The Rienks Group have completed similar downtown redevelopment projects, including the rehabilitation of a blighted building in Niles, which also received RAP grant funding through a subgrant allocation.

"We are thrilled to revitalize this iconic property in historic downtown Dowagiac, transforming the long-vacant floors into attainable housing and reinforcing the city's vision for a thriving community," said Peter Rienks, president of The Rienks Group. "This project not only preserves the character of Dowagiac's downtown but also adds 10 new housing units, fostering increased foot traffic and economic vitality while supporting the Wounded Minnow Saloon, a cherished community anchor."

As Dowagiac aims to attract reinvestment in its downtown, it hopes the project will serve as a catalyst for the creation of additional housing and redevelopment.

"The 'Wounded Minnow Building' has been a cornerstone of the City of Dowagiac since the Elks built it in 1912. Its redevelopment will breathe new life into unused portions of this beautiful property and bring additional housing to our vibrant downtown," said Dowagiac Mayor Don Lyons. "One of Dowagiac's highest priorities is to seek out and encourage private investment in our downtown area like the investment The Rienks Group is making in this building. We appreciate the MEDC's commitment to supporting community redevelopment. Paired with tax increment financing, the MEDC's support will help build momentum for our efforts to attract reinvestment into Dowagiac as we continue to create tomorrow."

This project will complement the allocation of RAP 2.0 subgrant funding to support the streetscape improvements three blocks south of the Wounded Minnow Building. It will also complement a recent Community Development Block Grant rental rehabilitation project, which added three affordable housing units; the market-rate units in this project will help meet goals for mixed-income housing downtown.

Cassopolis passes resolution supporting Sudanese refugee

By JUSTIN FLAGEL
For Leader Publications

CASSOPOLIS — The Cassopolis Village Council met for a brief regular meeting on Monday.

Resolution 2025-8 in Support of Mohammed Hasen was passed unanimously by the council. Hasen is a refugee from Sudan, living in Cassopolis under legal status and struggling to bring his wife and two young children to the United States to join him. The resolution came after the Aug. 25th village workshop meeting, during which Mohammed's primary sponsor Ruth Andrews and Ted Gogol spoke to the council and requested they consider approving a Village Resolution officially supporting the reunification with his family.

Hasen, along with his family, faced physical endangerment in Sudan and was brought to Cassopolis by the group "Welcome Home", headed up by Andrews. A community effort assisted him in finding affordable housing, furniture, and a job working for the Village of Cassopolis' Department of Public Works (DPW).

Though Hasen had fulfilled the obligations to make his family eligible to join him, changes by the Trump Administration have put that status in limbo. Several letters of support for Mohammed have been written to Congressional Representative Tim Walberg, including from the Cassopolis/Vandalia Chamber of Commerce and now the Village. A personal letter from Village DPW Superintendent Benjamin Anderson, who supervises Hasen at his job, was also submitted to Walberg. According to Gogol, Walberg recently conducted a small business roundtable in Cassopolis, where a folder of the letters was presented to him, asking for his assistance.

Walberg stated his willingness to assist and noted that such matters may take an extended period of time, noting his own son-in-law, who came from Rwanda, took nine months for approval, Police Chief Michael Todd McMichael reported that squatters in the village had recently been moved outside of Cassopolis. The next Cassopolis Area Utilities Authority meeting will take place at 3:30 p.m. Monday, September 15th.

The next village council workshop meeting will take place at 6 p.m. Monday, September 22nd. The next regular village council meeting will take place at 6 p.m. Monday, October 13th. All of the meetings are held at the village hall at 121 North. Disbrow Street.

Dowagiac City Council tables vote on consumption lounges

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — The Dowagiac City Council moved to table the approval of an amendment to its marijuana ordinance that would allow social consumption of cannabis in designated areas of dispensaries. The resolution would have added designated consumption licenses as an authorized permit type and set the limit at three of those licenses. Consumption lounges are places where people can go to socialize and consume marijuana.

The item was tabled after councilmember Laura Desilets asked for more information regarding the proposed amendment before making the decision. Mayor Don Lyons asked for a motion to postpone the vote and it passed. The item is expected to appear again in a future council agenda.

"There were enough questions from the public that the council wanted time to answer those questions," said City Manager Kevin Anderson.

See **COUNCIL**, page A3

Photo provided

Twisted Bee owner Tyler Cahall believes a marijuana consumption lounges would be a benefit both for his business and the community.

Today's obituaries **Page A4**

Mark Herman Jr. · Judy Bradley · Virginia M. Richey · Steven James Robinson · Janyce Eileen Gano · Jane Louise Lesniak · Mary Lou Baker

Frankly
Tips and quips, **A2**

Inside today

Classifieds	B4	Sports	B1
Comics	B6	Opinion	A5
Health	A7	Puzzles	B3

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FRANKLY

Tips, quips and blips

What is Frankly? It is where readers sound off on issues of the day. Have a tip, quip or blip? Call Frankly at 269-687-7702 or email rich.cains@leaderpub.com.

■ Arkansas farmers are asking for emergency funding to help save their farms due to the Trump tariffs. How is this not a form of Socialism?

■ Jobs report not too good. Time to fire the head of Labor?

■ Don't miss the Apple Festival. Coming soon!

■ The Lions looked absolutely pathetic. Is the dream over?

■ Dowagiac native hikes Appalachian Trail – What a great story.....! So proud of you, Brooks.

■ Brandywine boys tennis is awesome.

■ You want to stop catalytic converter thefts? Stop requiring them to be put on vehicles. You might as well put $2,000 under your windshield blade just for the taking.

■ The deployment of the military in our streets is not the answer. We do not wish to live in a military state. Maybe we need more prisons since we catch and release the criminals.

■ Trump is no saint, but at least the border is being secured after 50 years of utter chaos down south. However, there should be a path to citizenship and get these folks on the tax system and maybe a tax-payback fine.

■ If you don't know where your kids were last night at 3 AM, I think you might want to look into it.

WEATHER

Saturday: A slight chance of showers, with thunderstorms also possible after 2 p.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 83. South wind around 5 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

Saturday Night: A slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 62. South wind around 5 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 89.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 62.

Monday: Sunny and hot, with a high near 90.

Monday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 62.

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 89.

Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 61.

Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 88.

Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 61.

Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 87.

12 moving forward in SMC presidential search

By JOHN EBY
Southwestern Michigan College

DOWAGIAC — The search for Southwestern Michigan College's ninth president continues on schedule, the College reported today.

The Board of Trustees and Presidential Search Committee have been evaluating the 128 applications received over a six-week period that ended Aug. 17. At a special public meeting of the board on Sept. 5, the Committee recommended a slate of candidates for interviews.

Twelve of the contenders have agreed to move forward in the process: Michelle Allmendinger, Vincent Bowhay, John Davis, Julius Edwards, Billy Franklin, Michael Graham, Brandy Hawkins, Kevin McCaskey, Derek Moore, Klint Pleasant, Jonathan Swarts and David Wulf.

Director of Human Resources Nicole Lehman said, "The selected candidates have a wide range of experience and backgrounds, and we're eager to meet them in remote interviews over the next few weeks."

After those interviews, the Committee will select several finalists to interview on the SMC campus in a public setting.

SMC's eighth president, Dr. Joe Odenwald, resigned in February and Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer Brent Brewer was named Interim President effective May 11.

The College has set a goal of having a contract with the next president in place by the end of 2025.

Updates on the search process can be found at swmich.edu/presidential-search/.

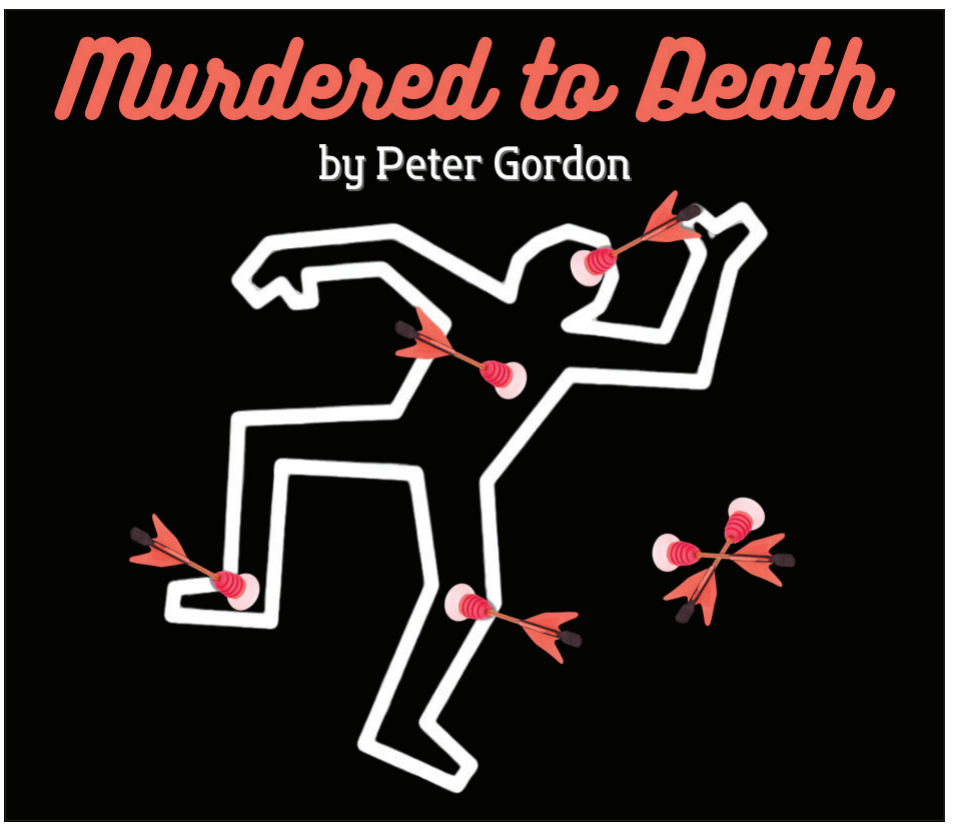

Photo provided
The Beckwith Theatre Co. will perform "Murdered To Death," a spoof of classic Agatha Christie stories.

Beckwith Theatre Co. to perform 'Murdered to Death'

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — The Beckwith Theatre Co. is gearing up to perform "Murdered To Death," a spoof of classic Agatha Christie stories.

Directed by Larry Nielsen, production dates are Sept. 26–28 and Oct. 3–5. Performance times are 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, and Sunday matinees are at 2 p.m.

The play is set in a 1930s country manor house where the mysterious death of the owner brings together an eccentric cast of characters including a butler, an English colonel, a French art dealer and a local detective.

The cast features Toy True and Pennie Hammond as Mildred Bagshot, Rose Brooks as Dorothy Foxton, John Taylor as Bunting, Renee Wright as Margaret Craddock, and William Klein as Col. Charles Craddock. Also starring are Cassie Holmes as Elizabeth Hartley-Trumpington, William Voit as Pierre Marceau, Connie Glanzer as Miss Joan Maple, Joe Daniel as Inspector Pratt, and Steve Hamel as Constable Thompkins.

Tickets are available at $15 apiece and can be purchased online.

Freels named SMC's chief assurance officer

By JOHN EBY
Southwestern Michigan College

DOWAGIAC — Native Texan Dr. Jeff Freels, Southwestern Michigan College's new chief assurance officer, aims to position faculty for success the way he did for students while teaching history at community colleges.

Freels, of St. Joseph, brings almost 20 years of expertise in academic assessment, accreditation, teaching and learning, instructional design and institutional research.

FREELS

Upon arriving in June after nine years at the home of the Longhorns, The University of Texas at Austin, Freels embarked on a "listening tour."

UT Austin, a public research university, enrolled 53,864 students last fall – more than Cass County's entire population, 51,550.

As Freels stated in his application, "I have been searching for good opportunities to transition back to community college work and found this opportunity appealing" and SMC's campus "charming."

"The strong culture attracted me," Freels said. "The vibe of students living on campus creates a strong base to build from. A thing in online education that's really interesting is that people nationally tend to want to take online courses from institutions they know and trust. That benefits SMC because it has a good reputation in the community and presents a real opportunity to leverage the beauty of its campus and its relationship with the community to provide a stream of access to education. Education opens eyes, minds and hearts to new ideas and new ways of doing things.

"The listening tour is coming to an end. I've got two big surveys out to faculty on academic technology, data and professional development and another closing (this week) on assessment and academic program review. Now it's a matter of going after each thing we've identified to work on.

"I take a very collaborative approach. You never accomplish anything by yourself. We don't have to report to the Higher Learning Commission until 2030 so we have time to be thoughtful about assessment."

Freels' interest in returning to his 2006-16 community-college roots reawakened in 2019 while volunteering quarterly with an Austin Community College advisory board.

"I loved the students and community-college environment," he said of teaching history in Maryland. "Small class sizes. The commitment to teaching. The commitment to the community and to service. I was attracted to all of that and really enjoy it."

Freels, the son of a nurse and a telecommunications professional, lived in Maryland for 11 years. In Baltimore County, he met his wife Kelly, a West Virginia coal miner's daughter, who, as a regional marketing manager for an engineering firm, can now lead her Texas team packaging requests for proposals remotely.

Sons Ethan, 14, in ninth grade, and, Andrew, 11, in fifth grade are enrolled in St. Joseph Public Schools. Freels' "knack for teaching" also helps him coach youth baseball.

"The community-college mindset is different from a research university, and the one I most identity with because my first job as an educator was to set students up to be successful in my class. My first job as an administrator is to set faculty up for success with the tools they need."

"SMC is relatively new to online education," said Freels, who taught his first online class in 2009 at Prince George's Community College. "I'm a big believer in online education, not that it should be the only way."

September's issue of Online Learning Journal published his and a Texas colleague's research on the residential hybrid model where students primarily live on or near the physical campus, engaging in regular in-person classes while simultaneously engaging with a substantial portion of their academic coursework through digital learning technologies.

Freels, who earned his Ph.D. in higher education in 2015 from Virginia's George Mason University, also co-authored a chapter in a recently-published book, Maximizing the Impact of Assessment in Higher Education/Closing the Loop with Change Management.

"Students today live through their phones and want educational experiences that speak to that," Freels said. "Even though there's this strong residential culture and interacting with faculty face-to-face in a classroom, there's still an expectation that they have supporting digital experiences for those courses that are simple and enable them to access assignments and to see their grades and feedback from instructors."

At SMC, "I started from a place of curiosity," he said. "I read all the documents related to assessment and online education here at the college, talking to people as much as possible and trying not to have any preconceived ideas."

When it comes to history, Freels is drawn to the Middle Ages. That European era spanned from the 5th to the late 15th century, between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance.

He's "obsessed" with the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) between the kingdoms of England and France, and Joan of Arc. In fact, last summer the Freels family toured France, Spain and Italy.

"One thing I love about history," he said, "is no matter how much you read, there's always more."

Suicide prevention coalition to hold 5K run/walk

BARODA — The Berrien County Suicide Prevention Coalition is hosting its second annual 5K run/walk in Baroda on Sept. 20.

The event begins at 9 a.m. at 9214 1st St., Baroda. Those interested in registering can go to runsignup.com, and have until Sept. 15 – when the registration period ends.

"At our 5K in 2024, we had over 160 participants and eight additional local resource tables to showcase other organizations that provide mental health in our area," the release stated. "In 2025, we are focused on topping that participant number and adding a few extra touches to engage our community with the Lions Club of Baroda offering a pancake/sausage breakfast for $10 at the American Legion Hall on 1st Street in Baroda."

– Paxton Media Group staff

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Established in 1886
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Published Saturday except holidays when the postal service does not deliver mail: New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day at 25 N. Second St., Niles, Michigan, by Leader Publications LLC. Periodicals paid at the Niles Post Office, 741 Broadway St. Postmaster: Send change of address to Circulation Manager, The Daily Star, 25 N. Second St., Niles, MI 49120.
Home Delivery by mail is local: $7.50/month, out of town: $10.50/month.
USPS 390-620

Police identify body found in pond near Sawyer business

By PAXTON MEDIA GROUP STAFF

SAWYER — Chikaming Township police have identified the man whose body was discovered earlier this week in a pond near a Sawyer business.

At about 11 a.m. Monday, Chikaming Township Deputy Chief Jason Roe was dispatched to Arlington Metals Corp. in Sawyer on a report of a body that was found in a pond on the property. The pond sits along Interstate 94, across from the Sawyer truck stop.

On Thursday, police identified the deceased as Charles Zalewski, a 48-year-old from Ohio.

Police Chief Todd Taylor said the medical examiner's office is working to pinpoint the cause of death.

"We don't know yet, but we're still investigating," Taylor said in reference to the Ohio man being in Southwest Michigan. "We're continuing to investigate the circumstances around Mr. Zalewski's death."

The Berrien County Sheriff's Office assisted Chikaming Township police when they brought out a boat to help recover the body. Police are asking anyone who may have information related to the incident to contact Roe at 269-469-3245.

Edwardsburg museum to host inaugural Sauk Trail Festival

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

EDWARDSBURG — A local historical group is inviting the community to explore and learn more about what life on the historic Sauk Trail looked like.

The Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum, 26818 W. Main St., is gearing up to host its inaugural Sauk Trail Festival: Echoes of Our Past from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27.

The free event is open to the public and will feature Pokagon Band dancers and drummers in native regalia, presentations by Pokagon Band historian Cecil Wilson and reenactors who demonstrate what life skills were like along the Sauk Trail from the years 1650 to 1750.

The event is the first of its kind at the museum and is the result of an in-house committee that has been collaborating for months with several groups, organizations and individuals, including the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, the Sarett Nature Center of Benton Harbor and reenactors from around the area.

Several booths will occupy the museum grounds, where reenactors will give the public a look at skills and tools for things such as spoon making, carpentry and tools and other objects traded in the 1600s and 1700s. A mockup of two walls will show construction techniques used by the French in the 1700s to build homes, a French woodworker will demonstrate spoon making with tools used at the time and a French voyager will display a miniature version of a voyageur canoe. An archeological dig will also be set up for children.

At Pleasant Lake, the public will be given rides in the Sarett Nature Center's voyageur canoe to demonstrate what water travel was like more than 400 years ago.

Individual presenters will be featured on the museum's newly renovated back deck, made possible through a grant of more than $2,900 awarded by the Michigan History Center and the Historical Society of Michigan. The grant is provided as part of the planned commemoration of America's 250th birthday in 2026.

Food will be available and the public also can experience the Sauk Trail Display which is exhibited inside the museum until Nov. 1. The Pokagon Band provided all showcase items for the display, including clothes, hand woven baskets and other objects.

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

The Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum, 26818 W. Main St., is gearing up to host its inaugural Sauk Trail Festival: Echoes of Our Past from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27.

COUNCIL

From page A1

According to council documents, when the City adopted their adult use marihuana license regulations in 2022, the actions included a resolution which established the types and number of establishments allowed. Those included three each of growing establishments, processor establishments, secure transporter establishments and safety compliance facilities. It also provided for six total retailer and/or microbusiness establishments.

Photo provided

Twisted Bee Cannabis Dispensary has called Dowagiac home since 2023.

At that time, the council chose to prohibit consumption establishments, event organizer and marihuana event permits. There has been some discussion of the last couple of years among city leaders about adding consumption lounges as an acceptable permit type but there was not enough information from similar sized communities to determine potential impacts. After seeing similarly sized communities in Hartford, Jones and New Buffalo offering consumption lounges, the city found those operations to have minimal impact on police enforcement.

While some community members in attendance expressed their support of the amendment, others in attendance expressed concerns about safety. Councilmember Laura Desilets stated she would like to know more about the city's plan for consumption lounges before making a decision.

Tyler Cahall, owner of Twisted Bee Cannabis Dispensary, 56271 M-51 S, Dowagiac, is hopeful the council will vote in favor of consumption lounges, believing they would provide safe and supportive environments for enthusiasts to consume cannabis. The facility has approximately 5,000 square feet currently unused that Cahall would like to renovate into a consumption lounge if the amendment is approved.

"We plan on having TVs with numerous things on, whether it be movies, games, sporting events, you name it," Cahall said. "We would love to have some pool tables, darts – we're kicking around a few different ideas, but we would also like to have a stage."

In addition to entertainment, Cahall would like to offer an educational component where enthusiasts and non-enthusiasts alike could meet at the consumption lounge to learn more about the plant.

"There's just such a stigma out here," Cahall said. "People just don't know and they're afraid of what they don't understand, which is very understandable. We're looking to not just do fun stuff of that nature, we're trying to do educational pieces, having people come out and speak and get the community engaged. People that normally wouldn't come to these events, we're going to make it safe and inviting with no consumption during those times. People can come out and learn about the medicine and get out there what this plant does for people."

In addition, Cahall believes that the addition of a consumption lounge to his facility will increase its distinction as a destination location bringing people into Dowagiac to explore and shop.

"Working with Dowagiac and the community has been wonderful," he said. "I'm just really happy to grow with the community here to be honest so I think this will be a very positive thing for the area. We do a pretty good job of attracting people from local municipalities that normally wouldn't come here just by what we're doing alone so if we can add another key element to that, I see it as nothing but a positive. It means more revenue for these businesses and more money for the city. We can all grow and prosper together."

In other business, council approved Resolution 2025-30, a resolution to approve the MSHDA Community Development Block Grant request for the City of Dowagiac Home Rehab Project. For nearly a decade, the City has tapped into funding through the State of Michigan to assist its low-moderate income families to receive grant funding to perform home improvement works. Those funds have been received through a variety of programs including Neighborhood Enhancement Program, MI-HOPE and CHILL.

Recently, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority re-envisioned their grant programs combining them into the MI-Neighborhood Program. Through this program, the City can continue to apply to receive funding for homeowner repairs that address, health, safety and energy efficiency of their homes. The city has worked with Market One to prepare a grant application to receive $400,000 in their next round of funding. According to Anderson, the city has received more than $1 million in funding over the past three to four years.

With the resolution approved, the council will need to hold a public hearing regarding the application.

"We've seen tremendous improvements in neighborhoods through this program," Anderson said. "We're excited and hopeful that we can get this next round of funding."

In further business, the council passed Resolution 2025-31, a resolution acting on the planning commission's recommendations regarding a Special Land Use Permit for 505 New York Ave.

The city has received state financing and grant funds to allow the City to construct a new Water Treatment Facility. The new facility will be located at 505 New York Ave., a parcel adjacent to the current facility off Chestnut Street. A recent amendment to the Zoning Ordinance allows for Water Treatment Facilities to be located within residential districts by a Special Land Use permit. The city has submitted that application, along with the site plan for review and approval by the planning commission. The proposed site plan complies with all applicable requirements of the city's zoning ordinance, pending the completion of the land combination processes.

"This is a big and important project," Anderson said. "This facility will cover the city for the next 50 years just like the older one," Anderson said. "It served a strong and useful life but it is time to move on."

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Assistant Director for Communications and Operations

University of Notre Dame Du Lac has opening for Asst. Dir. for Communications & Ops. in Notre Dame, IN, responsible for managing operations, budgeting, & event logistics. Leads comms, marketing, & branding to support student engagement, create policies. Participate as integral member of large, Student Affairs team. Bach Deg in Comms, Journalism, Public Relations or related degree & two (2) yrs exp in job offered or related field. Exp w/ desktop pub software (DTP), Adobe suite, & Google Docs. Exp w/ website tools such as Wordpress & Conductor. Exp w/ Anthology software platform.

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We Are Still Getting Items Out of the Barn - So Stop By to See What We Find!

OBITUARIES

Virginia M. Richey

March 26, 1946 – September 9, 2025

Virginia Marie "Ginny" Richey, 79, of Cassopolis, died peacefully Tuesday, September 9, 2025 in the comfort of her family's presence.

Her life began March 26, 1946 in East Liverpool, Ohio the fourth of eight children born to Chester and Helen Cline. She married Gary Lynn Richey July 22, 1968 in Gorham, Maine.

Ginny cherished her family and loved spoiling her grandchildren. She was an amazing cook, especially her fried chicken. Cooking and her grandchildren were her world.

Ginny will be greatly missed by family and friends. She is survived by her beloved husband of fifty-seven years, Gary Richey of Cassopolis; daughter, Melissa (Kevin) Jenkins of Elkhart, Indiana; sons, Bart (Kristy) Richey of Elkhart, Indiana, Brett (Theresa) Richey of Cassopolis; seven grandchildren, Karvel Anderson of New York, Jesse (Viv) Richey of Omaha, Nebraska, Kain Jenkins, Keyla Jenkins, Kendall (Rylee) Jenkins, Makayla Smith, all of Elkhart, Indiana, Dillon (Chelsea) Richey of Kalamazoo; five great grandchildren and one on the way; brothers, Terry (Susan) Cline of Chester, West Virginia, Kim Cline of West Virginia; and a host of nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; sister, Ruthanne Ratkovich; and six brothers, Larry Cline, Buck Cline, Herkie Cline, and Thomas Cline.

Family and friends will gather Saturday, September 13, 2025 from 12:00 noon until 3:00 pm in Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, 202 North Broadway Street, Cassopolis. We will then process to Dailey Cemetery for a Graveside Service.

Mrs. Richey will be laid to rest in Dailey Cemetery, Cassopolis.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Ginny be made to Caring Circle Hospice, 4025 Health Park Lane, St. Joseph, Michigan 49085.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis. Please share a memory or a message online: wagnercares.com.

Judy Bradley

March 1, 1952 – September 6, 2025

In Loving Memory of Judy Bradley

Judy Bradley, a beloved mother, grandmother, great grandmother, sister, aunt, and friend, passed away peacefully on September 6, 2025. She was 73 years old.

Judy was known for her quiet strength, sharp wit, and deep love for her family. She dedicated many years of her life working at Jessup Door in Dowagiac and later at Tyler Refrigeration in Niles. A woman of steadfast independence and an unwavering work ethic, Judy spent her life providing for her family.

After retiring, Judy found joy in the simple comforts of home, where she spent her days with her two cherished cats, Suzie and Eve, and her great-grandson Austin. Her happiest moments were those shared with her grandchildren and great grandchildren, whom she loved fiercely and without reservation. Conversations with them often brought out her brightest smiles and warmest laughs.

Judy's love was quiet but deep, and when she gave it, she gave all of herself. She had a no-nonsense demeanor, a quick sense of humor, and a heart full of love for those closest to her.

She is survived by her daughter, Regina Rock; her grandchildren Christina Castaneda and Bradley Rock (Stacey); and her great-grandchildren Austin, Devin, Maysen, Faith, and Jaxon. She also leaves behind her devoted sisters: Diane Jackson, Betty Chandler, Cathy Pasley (Glen), Carolyn Costner, Brenda Moore, and Lisa Herter; along with many nieces and nephews who brought her great joy throughout her life.

Judy was preceded in death by her grandparents Herman and Edna Blankenship, Houston and Donar Jackson. Father Clifton Jackson and mother Helen Jackson, and her siblings Houston Jackson, Ricky Jackson, Keith Jackson, Kenneth Jackson, and Raynell Jackson.

She will be deeply missed by all who knew her and remembered for her resilience, her laughter, and her unwavering love for her family.

A private celebration of life will be held by the family May 9th 2026, 2pm at 928 Hillandale Road, Benton Harbor Michigan. All are welcome to join.

Janyce Eileen Gano

October 30, 1925 – September 5, 2025

Janyce E. Gano, 99, of Niles, died peacefully Friday, September 5, 2025.

Her life began October 30, 1925 in St. Joseph, Michigan. She and her twin brother, Jerry Smith, were born to Earle and Lucille (Franz) Smith. Janyce married Robert Dean Gano June 14, 1945 in Niles, Michigan.

Janyce spent most of her life in Niles and was a graduate of Niles High School. She and Dean raised their children in Niles. She took the time to invest in her community by volunteering in the schools while her children were young, and for many years at Pawating Hospital, now Corewell Health Lakeland. Janyce loved to knit and do various crafts, but most importantly she cherished her family and loved being with them.

She was a member of New Journey United Methodist Church, Niles, formerly the Wesley United Methodist Church.

Janyce will be greatly missed by family and friends. She is survived by one daughter, Mary Hayden of South Bend, Indiana; two sons, Jon (Connie) Gano of Missouri, Brian (Lisa) Gano of Auburn; eight grandchildren; fifteen great grandchildren; three great great grandchildren; one sister, Barb Brooks of Niles; and a host of nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, R. Dean Gano; and two brothers, Donavon Smith, Jerry Smith.

The family will observe a private remembrance at this time.

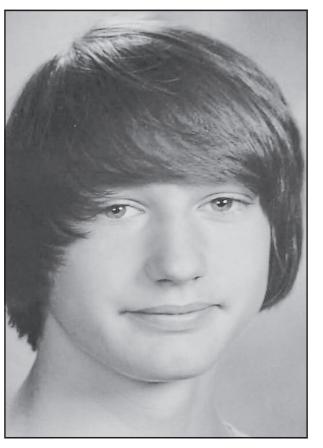
Janyce will be laid to rest beside her beloved husband in Silverbrook Cemetery, Niles.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Janyce be made to a charity of the donor's choice.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritterwickens.com.

Mark Herman Jr.

March 1, 2000 – August 31, 2025



Mark Allen Herman Jr. "Marky" took his final journey on August 31, 2025.

Mark was born on March 1, 2000 in Watervliet, Michigan to Mark Allen Herman Sr. of Benton Harbor, Michigan and Jennifer Pagels of Marshall, Michigan.

Even at an early age, Marky brought laughter and smiles to the lives around him. Always curious and finding friends wherever he went. He was also a gentle and loving soul, holding his people and animals close.

Mark was a foreman at Great Lakes Bins and enjoyed going to work with the people he cared about and called friends. He was also a probationary firefighter at Indian Lake Volunteer Fire Department, which made him very proud. He was dedicated and loved his firefighter family.

Mark is survived by his parents, Mark and Jennifer; sister, Leanna Pagels of Bridgman; brother, Keegan Huffaker of Ames, Iowa; grandparents, Robert Pagels and Maude Moore of Eau Claire, Michigan and Kathy Gaston of Benton Harbor, Michigan; girlfriend, Harley Drummond of Dowagiac, Michigan, and many other cherished friends.

In lieu of flowers, Mark's family has requested that donations be made to, MentalHealthAwarness.org

Mark, you left us far too soon. Our hearts are hurting. Every one of us will treasure the memories, the smiles, and laughter that was shared so freely, being goofy and loving life to its fullest. We hope you find peace and rest easy. Knowing you are loved by many and missed greatly.

Visitation for Mark will be on Sunday, September 14, 2025, from 1:00pm to 3:00pm at Bowerman Funeral Home, 6635 E. Main St. Eau Claire, MI 49111.

Death notices

Mary Lou Baker, 91, passed away on September 8, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Service on September 12, 2025, at 2:00pm at Brown Funeral Home. Arrangements entrusted to Brown Funeral Home.

Steven James Robinson, 43, passed away on Thursday, September 4, 2025. Arrangements are pending at Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis.

Jane Louise Lesniak

June 20, 1948 – September 8, 2025

Jane Louise Lesniak, age 77 years of Niles, Michigan; mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, trader of antiques, gardener, and devout follower of Jesus died peacefully at 2:26 p.m. on Monday, September 8, 2025 with her family at her side at the Hanson Hospice Center in Stevensville, Michigan following a long battle against pancreatic cancer. Her family is grateful for the kind and compassionate care of the Caring Circle Hospice staff.

She was born on June 20, 1948 in Saint Joseph, Michigan to Theodore Richard and Florine Della Doris (Samsen) Parker, and graduated from Saint Joseph High School. She came to Niles in 1968, and was employed as the Manager at the Four Flags Antique Mall for many years. More recently, she was employed for thirteen years at the Martin's Supermarket in Niles as a Supervisor in the Deli department.

Jane was a member of the Calvary Road Community Church in Niles, having met Pastor Mark through Calvary Road's Fifth Street ministry. When younger, she enjoyed collecting antique pottery and furniture, mostly pieces that she could actually use every day, and for a while she collected Boyd's Bears characters. She enjoyed maintaining the flower gardens around her house, and nearly always had music playing, including her favorite artists, who are known as Kenny G and TobyMac.

While she enjoyed antiques, she was more interested in the people with whom she shared that interest, and working at the antique mall allowed her to develop relationships with many friends. Her job at the supermarket also allowed her to be face-to-face with the shoppers, and she loved the congregation at Calvary Road, but her greatest interest was her family.

She was sadly preceded in death by her sister, Linda Herman in 1985, a brother, Richard Parker, and by their parents, Ted and Florine Parker.

Surviving family includes her children, Paul Lesniak and Lori Ann Lesniak, both of Niles; grandchildren, Ashley Lesniak, Ayana Lesniak, and Loryana Jane Harris; great-grandchildren Jaxon, Noah, Cayden, and Serenity; and Jane's siblings, Jon Parker, and Diana Tippy, Ted Parker, and Lisa (& Ryan) Katewich, all of Saint Joseph, sister-in-law Barb (Mrs. Richard) Parker of Benton Harbor, Michigan; and many nieces and nephews.

The funeral service for Jane Lesniak will be at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 13, 2025 at the First Baptist Church (shared with Calvary Road), 1446 East Main Street in Niles, with Pastor Mark Youngberg of the church officiating. The family will receive relatives and friends on Saturday at the church, beginning at 2:00 p.m.

Contributions in memory of Jane may be made to the American Diabetes Association to honor her sister, Linda; or to the Berrien County Cancer Service, 3900 Hollywood Road, Saint Joseph, Michigan, 49085; https://bccancerservice.org/. Arrangements were completed at the Halbritter-Wickens Funeral Home, 615 East Main Street in Niles. Condolences and memories may be left at: www.halbritterwickens.com

Jane clearly enjoyed life, including the 'stuff' in life such as the solid permanence of pottery and antiques, the less permanent beauty of flowers in her garden, and the ephemeral quality of music, which is gone as soon as it is heard. But greater than those things was her love for people, the folks at the mall, at the market, and at church; and moreso, the love for her family; all evidence of following the command to Love God and love people.

'Unity, courage and defiance': 9/11 Flight 93 passengers and crew honored

By BENJAMIN KAIL
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (TNS)

Jeff Swensen / Getty Images / TNS

Visitors look over the crash site following the memorial ceremony at the Flight 93 National Memorial on Sept. 11 in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The nation marked the 24th anniversary of the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, when the terrorist group al-Qaeda flew hijacked airplanes into the World Trade Center, Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and the Pentagon, killing nearly 3,000 people.

STONYCREEK, Pa. — Edward Felt was always a problem solver.

The 41-year-old software engineer needed to get to San Francisco for an unexpected work trip, and he couldn't get a flight on his usual Continental Airlines. So he booked last minute with United Airlines – Flight 93.

"I knew my brother was traveling that day," Gordon Felt told the Post-Gazette Thursday morning, 24 years after Flight 93 crashed in this Somerset County field after passengers fought back against the terrorist hijackers. "But these things happen to other people – that's what you think."

Standing near the solemn white marble memorial engraved with the names of 40 passengers and crew who died along with almost 3,000 others in New York City and Washington, D.C. on Sept. 11, 2001, Gordon Felt was among the many family members and government leaders gathering from across the country and around the globe Thursday to honor those who were lost.

Felt, a longtime spokesman for Flight 93 families, grew emotional as he shared that Edward, his older brother, had become the patriarch of his family back when their father had died.

Edward was brilliant with numbers and computers, but never made people feel like they weren't as smart as him, said Felt, a central New York native. Edward's morning routine often included reading the newspaper over breakfast with his eldest daughter, said Felt. He added that Edward's two now-adult daughters are just as smart as their dad was.

"He was a tough sibling to follow in school – his science and math teachers couldn't keep up with him," he said. "He was fascinated by everything. He loved to take things apart ... fix things and make them work. But he would give you the shirt off his back. And he was always asking what you were doing – he was a great mentor. That's who he was."

Thousands of students from 238 schools around the world viewed Thursday's memorial service online as part of a 9/11 educational effort, according to Stephen Clark, superintendent of National Parks for Western Pennsylvania.

Veterans Affairs Secretary Doug Collins was in attendance, along with local and state officials and dignitaries from Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. After the morning ceremonies, Gov. Josh Shapiro spoke with family members and took part in a wreath-laying event in the afternoon.

"Here brave men and women made history," Clark said. "Their decision to fight back ... saved an untold number of lives, and saved the U.S. Capitol."

Most of those on Flight 93 were strangers to one another, Clark said.

But in a critical moment in U.S. and world history, the group showed "unity, courage and defiance" in the face of tremendous adversity.

Clark also honored the 441 first responders who died that day. The Somerset Regional Volunteer Fire Department, one of the first to respond to the Flight 93 crash, led a solemn wreath-laying ceremony with families at the site of the crash.

Later, a few dozen United Airlines workers laid wreaths and flowers along the memorial wall.

A hush fell over the crowd of seated family members and standing visitors, supporters and Armed Services members, many of them choked up as the names of the passengers and crew were read, with two bells clanging and echoing over the field after every name.

Several family members read their loved ones' names, remembering "my brother," "my sister," "my cousin," "my son."

Kenny Nackie, whose brother Louis "Joey" Nacke II died at 42 on Flight 93, told The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette his family is unified by shared memories of his brother – a bond they've sealed with tattoos of the Superman emblem.

Nackie stood beside Shapiro and other family members during several moments of silence. Later, the governor and Nackie chatted as they walked toward the crash site for the second wreath-laying.

Joey, who lived in New Hope, was a longtime collector of comic books and a director of warehousing for KB Toys. But his love for comic books and toys wasn't the only reason for the tattoos or the Superman action figure laid among flowers under his name on the memorial wall.

Nackie said Joey as a 5-year-old donned a blue blanket for a cape and leapt through a plate glass window and screen door. He wound up getting stuck and then slicing his arm almost to the bone, leading to more than 100 stitches and a large scar.

"He survived that incident," Mr. Nackie said. "Later in life he decided to get (a tattoo of) the Superman emblem above the scar, just to remind us that we all have that inner child. He was a big kid at heart. He's with us every day."

OPINION

WRITE US: Here's how to submit a letter to the editor:
Online: leaderpub.com/services/letters-to-the-editor-submission/
Email: news@leaderpub.com
Regular mail: Editorial Page, Leader Publications, 25 N. 2nd St., Niles MI 49120

All letters should include a daytime telephone number and street address for verification. Letters must be 500 words or fewer. Leader Publications reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, grammar, inappropriate content and libel.

THE CONVERSATION

'This will not end here'

A scholar explains why Charlie Kirk's killing could embolden political violence

By THE CONVERSATION

Al Diaz / Tribune News Service

Charlie Kirk, founder of Turning Point USA, was killed in a shooting Sept. 10 on a college campus in Utah.

The fatal shooting of prominent conservative activist Charlie Kirk on Sept. 10 has brought renewed attention to the climate of political violence in America. Kirk's death reflects a sizable increase in threats against officeholders and politicians at the local and federal level.

Alfonso Serrano, a politics editor at The Conversation, spoke with University of Massachusetts Lowell scholar Arie Perliger after Kirk's shooting. Perliger studies political violence and assassinations and spoke bluntly about political polarization in the United States.

Serrano: What were your initial thoughts after Charlie Kirk's fatal shooting?

Perliger: It was a bit unusual that the attack was not against an elected official. Rarely have we seen political assassinations that are aimed at the nonprofit political landscape. Usually those people are not deemed important enough.

Secondly, and it's something I see a lot in my research, political assassinations come in waves. We see that not only in the United States but other countries. I've looked at political assassinations in many democracies, and one of the things I see in a fairly consistent manner is that political assassinations create a process of escalation that encourages others on the extreme political spectrum to feel the need to retaliate. And that is my main concern. That this process creates legitimization and acceptance, that it provides the sense that this is an acceptable form of political action. This will not end here.

In 2024, there were two attempts to assassinate Donald Trump. Then, in early 2025, the residence of Gov. Josh Shapiro in Pennsylvania was firebombed on Passover, and within months the U.S. witnessed the killing of Minnesota state lawmaker Melissa Hortman and her husband, among other acts of political violence. The U.S., of course, is not immune to political violence, as we saw in the 1960s. But what stands out about this latest wave?

The data shows that there's a substantial increase in the level of threats against officeholders at the local and federal level. What's different now is we see an increased support in political violence from both sides of the political spectrum. Consistently, almost a quarter of the public is willing to support political violence in some form, or see that as a legitimate form of political action.

And as we see an increased political polarization, and the increased demonization of political rivals, we see the decline and disappearance of political discourse and policymaking. The bipartisan political process in Congress in the past few years has been almost nonexistent. And that spills over to the public, where the other (political) side is seen as a one-dimensional figure that is a threat.

We've had political polarization in the U.S. in the past, but usually it was around a specific issue like civil rights in the 1960s and the Vietnam War. But this time there is no specific issue that we can say, "If we solve this, we solve the political polarization." The problem is that there's no space for convergence from both sides where they can work together, so there's no bridges they can rely on to come together.

Does it strike you that Kirk's assassination occurred on a college campus? It seems as if college campuses have become a flash point of violence in the U.S.

Campuses are becoming more and more contentious spaces. They were always intellectual hubs where political views were debated intensively. Activism was always part of campus life. But what we've seen in the past year is that campus life has become in some cases more violent. And the fact that Kirk was killed on a campus is, I think, heartbreaking because campuses symbolize a place where you can engage in political debate in a way that encourages intellectual exploration.

What's happened in the past year is that campuses are not those spaces anymore. Yes, we still see political activism, but it's the activism that doesn't leave any room for actual debate. It's just two sides that are completely hostile to each other and unwilling to hear each other.

Trump on Wednesday night blamed the media and the "radical left" for language used to describe people like Kirk. He said this rhetoric is "responsible for the terrorism that we're seeing in our country today." Any thoughts?

I agree that language and rhetoric impact people's behavior. I've seen that again and again in my studies, that the discourse of political figures impacts the way people think of the legitimacy of violence. Of course, we need to understand the context here, which is that Trump himself was willing to pardon thousands of people who engaged in political violence.

So, on the one hand, I agree with him that political leaders should be responsible for how they discuss political issues. It's important for them to convey that political discourse can be constructive. However, we need to acknowledge that our own government, in many cases, sends signals that provide encouragement and support that legitimize violence. I think it's important for politicians on both sides to be consistent in understanding that the way they discuss their political rivals is important.

You're an expert on the history of political assassinations. How do countries untangle themselves from waves of political violence?

Political leaders need to insist on working together. There are lots of policy areas where politicians can work together. When we see that people can work together within the political system, that sends an important message, that there is a space where we can work together. The second thing is trying to think about how the U.S. can restructure part of the political process to ensure that there is a real competition of ideas, to incentivize a constructive, productive approach that will legitimize those who are willing to engage in constructive policymaking.

Any last thoughts?

As part of my work, I track the most extremist online social media accounts, and what we see right now is a strong sense that this assassination is being celebrated by parts of the left. And that has created an escalation of language from those in the extreme right social media ecosystem. There is much more willingness to discuss issues of retaliation, an actual civil war.

And that's my biggest worry. If you look at social media, what we see is that both sides embrace this kind of rhetoric that really concerns me. More than ever, I've seen calls for retaliation and a strong sense that the other side is unwilling to show any sympathy to what happened. Emotions are running very high, and I'm very worried about what may happen in the next few weeks.

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Social scientists have long found women tend to be more religious than men – but Gen Z may show a shift

By RYAN BURGE
Washington University in St. Louis (The Conversation)

For decades, one of the most consistent findings in religion research has been that women tend to be more religious than men. This holds true across dozens of countries and on nearly every measure of religiosity, from how often someone prays to how important faith is in their lives.

Social scientists have struggled to pinpoint a universal cause for this pattern. Theories run the gamut – from the claim that it has something to do with women being more risk averse to the argument that religion offers women support for social responsibilities around birth, death and raising children.

In the past few years, however, survey data in the U.S. has started to tell a different story. Today, there is less empirical evidence that women are more religious than men – a debate I've tracked closely as a quantitative scholar of American religion. Looking at Generation Z, in particular, a number of results have raised some eyebrows, pointing toward other divides throughout the country.

In 2023, the American Enterprise Institute's Survey Center on American Life found that 39 percent of Gen Z women say they do not have a religious affiliation, compared to 34 percent of men from the same generation. The past several waves of data from the Cooperative Election Study, a national survey, have found that men born after 1990 – a mix of younger millennials and Gen Z – are slightly more likely to attend religious services weekly than women of the same age.

When I give a lecture or presentation, often the first question I'm asked is about this surprising result.

I warn people to take it with a grain of salt. According to data from the 2022 General Social Survey, one of the most well-respected national polls, the opposite is true: among Americans ages 18-45, women are still more likely to attend a house of worship nearly every week. And the Pew Religious Landscape Study, which was released in February 2025, concludes, "While the gender gap in American religion appears to be narrowing, there are still no birth cohorts in which men are significantly more religious than women."

All together, a growing body of survey evidence suggests that the overall religiosity of young American adults does not vary significantly by gender.

Anecdotal reports about scores of young men flocking to church or joining religious communities like Eastern Orthodoxy seem to grab headlines. However, the idea of a reversal in the gender gap is not supported by evidence – only that it is narrowing.

If America's gender gap around religion is changing, perhaps politics can help explain why.

A growing body of survey data suggests that overall, young men are moving further to the right on political matters, while young women are becoming increasingly progressive.

An NBC News poll in April 2025 found that among people ages 30-44, men were about 9 percentage points more likely to approve of Donald Trump's job performance than women of the same age. Among those ages 18-29, the gap widened to a staggering 21 points.

A few months later, NBC polled nearly 3,000 young Americans about how they define success, asking them to select the top three factors from a list of 13. Overall, men between 18-29 rated "being married" and "having children" slightly higher than women their age. Among Gen Z men who voted for Trump, having children was the most important. Women who voted for Kamala Harris, meanwhile, ranked children near the bottom.

The largest religious traditions in America today are evangelical Protestant Christianity and the Catholic Church. Both groups' teachings emphasize "traditional" gender roles, marriage and having children. For a growing wave of young progressive women, such teachings are at odds with their desire to make advances in the workplace and society. Some analysts argue that those tensions, as well as views on LGBTQ+ rights, are driving women away from institutional religion.

As a result, Generation Z may be the most visible manifestation of the growing "God gap" in American politics.

In short, the religious compositions of the two major political parties have gone in opposite directions. In the 1990s, 67 percent of Republicans said they believed in God without a doubt, and 63 percent of Democrats said the same, according to my analysis of General Social Survey data. By 2022, certain belief in God had dropped to 39 percent among Democrats, while holding fairly steady among Republicans, at 63 percent. Twenty-eight percent of Democrats regularly attend a house of worship, compared to 42 percent of Republicans; in the 1970s, the gap was only 4 percentage points.

This all points to a broader, potentially more polarized future for the American public. Already, there is evidence that a growing number of people choose their house of worship based on political tribe, not just theological beliefs, making congregations less diverse. Women's and men's competing interests and preferences may make it harder to find a suitable partner. Common ground may be harder to find when there are fewer chances for interaction and conversation.

Ultimately, these trends suggest a future where polarization extends beyond politics and into the very fabric of American life – shaping where people worship, who they marry, and how communities form.

Ryan Burge is a professor of Practice at the Danforth Center on Religion and Politics at Washington University in St. Louis. This article is republished under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article at https://theconversation.com.

When you're caught between 'yes' and 'no,' 'maybe' isn't the way to go

By JULIAN GIVI
West Virginia University (The Conversation)

Say you win a radio sweepstakes giving you two tickets to a sold-out concert the upcoming weekend. You eagerly text your friend and ask if they'd like to join.

Their response? "Maybe."

Your mood immediately turns. You feel slighted rather than joyous as you're left in limbo: Now you need to wait for your waffling friend to make a decision before you can figure out your plans for the concert.

I'm a consumer psychologist who has studied social decision-making for over a decade. And if you've experienced anything like the above anecdote, I can tell you that you're not alone. People responding "maybe" to invitations is a common yet irksome aspect of social life. Recently, my co-authors and I published a series of studies examining what goes on in people's heads when they aren't sure whether to accept an invitation.

Leaving your options open

Social invitations can be a delicate dance, and people often misread what someone extending an invite wants to hear.

We consistently found that people overestimate an inviter's likelihood of preferring a "maybe" over a "no." Moreover, they fail to realize how much more disrespected people feel when they receive a "maybe" in response to their invitation.

Another pattern emerged: The more someone incorrectly assumed that a host preferred a tentative response, the more likely they were to respond with a "maybe" themselves.

Naturally, we wanted to figure out why this awkward dynamic plays out. We found that it's largely due to something called "motivated reasoning." Motivated reasoning occurs when a person interprets information in a biased way to arrive at a conclusion that aligns with their own wishes.

In other words, invitees convince themselves that inviters want to hear "maybe" instead of "no," because a "maybe" is better for the invitee, allowing them to leave their options open. Saying "no" right off the bat eliminates one's options and opens the door for FOMO, or fear of missing out, to emerge.

Just say 'no'

That said, there were certain situations that made people more comfortable saying "no" to an invite.

In one study, we had recipients of an invitation put themselves in the shoes of the person extending the invite. This made them more likely to realize that they'd probably prefer a definitive answer. That is, it seemed to prevent motivated reasoning from emerging.

In another study, we had participants get invited to do something they didn't want to do. We found that motivated reasoning then became irrelevant: They had no desire to keep their options open, so they were more likely to assume that a "no" was preferable to a "maybe."

Interestingly, while invitations are a widespread aspect of social life, social scientists have only recently started studying them. For example, a 2024 study found that people tend to overestimate the negative consequences of saying "no" to invitations. They think it will upset, anger and disappoint inviters more than is the case. This could also be part of the reason that many people fail to realize that someone extending an invitation prefers a "no" to a "maybe." Other research has explored whether people respond better to some reasons for declining an invite over others: saying you're too busy, not great; saying you don't have enough money to make it work, much better.

While navigating social situations can be tricky, our work suggests that being direct and definitive is sometimes best.

It might reduce your options. But it'll keep those who invited you from being left in limbo – and maybe they'll still think of you when the next concert comes to town.

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. Julian Givi is an assistant professor of marketing at West Virginia University. This article is republished under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article at https://theconversation.com.

Van Buren Conservation District launches inland lake project

Photo provided / Mark Bugnaski Photography

Planting trees along a lakeshore can help filter pollutants and keep our lakes clean and healthy.

By PAXTON MEDIA GROUP STAFF

The Van Buren Conservation District and Michigan Lakes and Streams Association announced a grant project to plant 4,900 trees and shrubs around six inland lakes in Southwest Michigan.

According to a news release, the program is free for landowners, and the trees will be planted by a contractor. This free tree program is a great way to add wildlife habitat, privacy fences or replace aging trees.

This tree planting project will reduce runoff and improve the quality of water in lakes and streams, as well as provide wildlife habitat near Round Lake, Gravel Lake and Eagle Lake in Van Buren County, as well as and Harwood Lake, Birch Lake and Baldwin Lake in Cass County. These trees will capture and filter about 440,000 gallons of runoff water.

Private property owners on these six lakes who are interested in having trees planted on their property at no cost are encouraged to reach out now. A brief interest form is available at https://tinyurl.com/lakes-trees.

The first planting will be this fall, the release stated.

Those interested in the project are invited to attend a seminar hosted by the Michigan Lakes and Streams Association on Sept. 23 at Porter Township Hall in Van Buren County from 5-8 p.m. Attendees can reserve a seat by emailing Melissa DeSimone at melissa.desimone@mymlsa.org.

Presenters will include Julia Kirkwood of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, anwd Energy and Erin Fuller of the Van Buren Conservation District.

This collaborative project is supported by key partner organizations including the Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, EGLE, Michigan State University Extension, and the St. Joe River Basin Commission. This project is made possible by a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant through the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Homeless man resentenced in probation violation case

By DEBRA HAIGHT
For Dowagiac

CASSOPOLIS — A homeless Dowagiac man who was sentenced to prison in August for violating his probation for second-degree criminal sexual conduct was resentenced and given the chance to stay out of prison Thursday in Cass County Circuit Court.

CONRAD

Trent Aaron Conrad, 23, homeless but formerly of Dowagiac, pleaded guilty to violating his probation from a Nov. 8, 2024 sentence for second-degree criminal sexual conduct and was sentenced Aug. 29 to 36 months to 15 years in prison with credit for 104 days served.

His probation was revoked under that original sentencing. The CSC incident occurred in March, 2024 in Dowagiac.

Thursday, Conrad was resentenced and given the chance to stay out of prison and attend a treatment program. Attorneys and the court had initially thought that his CSC conviction had kept him from being eligible for a probation program.

Thursday, Judge Herman continued Conrad's probation and was sentenced to 90 days in jail with credit for 64 days served. Conrad can be released to a residential probation program when a bed becomes available.

Heather Poe, 38, of South Bend, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine and was sentenced to credit for 183 days served and $1,548 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred June 18, 2024 in Mason Township near the Five Points intersection on U.S. 12. The car Poe was a passenger in was stopped by police and the car was impounded after the driver was found to have no operator's license or insurance. A K-9 police dog alerted on Poe for possible drugs.

Judge Herman noted that Poe is currently serving a five year sentence in Elkhart County, Indiana for burglary and auto theft. She was given a sentence of five years in prison but had two years suspended the remaining three years on work release.

Both Assistant Prosecutor Jason Ronning and defense attorney Robert Drake agreed with Judge Herman that it didn't make sense for Poe to be sentenced to additional probation or incarceration as she is currently being supervised in Indiana.

Judge Herman told Poe that she will be facing a revolving door in and out of jail or prison if she doesn't address her addiction issues. "Hopefully that's not what you want in life," he said.

"You have had a couple of positive meth screens in the last few months, you're really playing with fire," the judge added. "If you don't give up meth, you will end up spending more time in prison in Indiana … If you come back here, I won't forget I gave you this chance and will know you're not serious."

"I hope you take it seriously and do what you need to do to complete your time in Indiana. You're going to have to make choices, if you make the wrong choices, there will be consequences … There are two choices today, you can go to prison or get time served. Any probation would duplicate what Elkhart is doing."

Photos by David Guralnick / The Detroit News / TNS

Former Michigan Republican Party co-chair Meshawn Maddock, center, is hugged after Ingham County District Court Judge Kristen Simmons tossed out criminal charges against her and 14 co-defendants for signing a certificate in December 2020 falsely claiming President Donald Trump won the 2020 election in Michigan.

Judge tosses out criminal charges against 2020 Trump false electors

By CRAIG MAUGER and BETH LEBLANC
The Detroit News (TNS)

Supporters of 15 Michigan Republican activists stand outside 54A District Court in downtown Lansing on Sept. 9, ahead of a ruling on whether the 2020 false electors for Donald Trump should stand trial for signing a certificate in falsely claiming Trump won Michigan in the 2020 election. Judge Kristen Simmons tossed the criminal charges.

LANSING — An Ingham County judge threw out on Tuesday criminal charges against 15 Michigan Republicans who signed a certificate falsely claiming President Donald Trump won the 2020 election, ruling that state prosecutors had failed to show an intent to commit fraud.

The decision from Judge Kristen Simmons, an appointee of Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, tossed aside Michigan prosecutors' most direct attempt to bring accountability for the bid to reverse the state's 2020 result.

Simmons in Ingham County's 54A District Court said she believes the Republicans were exercising their constitutional rights by seeking a redress of grievances about the election, which Trump lost to Democrat Joe Biden.

"This is a fraud case, and we have to prove intent and I do not believe there is evidence sufficient to prove intent," Simmons said, in front of a crowded courtroom of defendants, their lawyers and the media.

Over the last two years, Simmons has held three sets of preliminary examinations for the Republican electors who were facing felony forgery and uttering and publishing charges.

Simmons had the responsibility to decide whether Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel's office presented enough evidence to prove there's probable cause to believe crimes occurred.

The document the Michigan Republicans signed during a Dec. 14, 2020, gathering said they were Michigan's "duly elected and qualified" presidential electors and was eventually used by Trump advisers in an unsuccessful attempt to overturn his loss to Biden.

Biden had won Michigan's 16 electoral votes by defeating Trump by about 154,000 votes or 3 percentage points, 51 percent-48 percent, in the November 2020 election.

The GOP electors pleaded not guilty and have contended they were acting on the advice of Republican lawyers and had no intent to defraud anyone – a required element of the charges.

About two dozen supporters of the Michigan Republican activists facing prosecution gathered outside of the courthouse an hour before the court hearing, chanting "Free the 15" and holding handmade signs that read "End Political Lawfare," "Nessel's Hoax," "Aren't there REAL Crimes to Prosecute?" and "Stop the Fake Charges!"

As defendants and their attorneys passed by, they stopped to thank the group for their support.

Robyn Peake, president of the Republican Women's Federation of Michigan, found some encouragement in the delays in the case.

"There's a possibility that they have been testing the political winds and how things have changed since Trump's current term to see what is the public opinion and what is the tone of the United States at this point," Peake said. "We've seen a lot of changes in the last almost 12 months and I think the political tone right now is different in the United States than it what it was."

But Tom McMillin, a Republican member of the State Board of Education and former state lawmaker from Troy, expressed frustration with the length of the court process so far.

"These are years and years these people have had it over their head and she enjoys it," McMillin said of Nessel's office.

Sam Harris, a trustee for Waterford Township, called the case a "political prosecution."

"It's been going on for five years," Harris said. "A lot of these people are older, it's hurt them financially, bankrupt some, it's affected their health."

'A politically motivated witch hunt'

On July 18, 2023, Nessel first announced eight felony charges against each of the 16 Republicans whose names appeared on the false electoral certificate. The top charges carry a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison. One of the electors, James Renner of Lansing, reached a cooperation agreement with Nessel's office, and the charges were dropped against him.

"The false electors' actions undermined the public's faith in the integrity of our elections and, we believe, also plainly violated the laws by which we administer our elections in Michigan," Nessel said in July 2023.

However, in the preliminary examinations, Nessel's prosecutors often struggled to establish that each of the 15 GOP electors had an intent to defraud. Renner, one of the state's key witnesses, testified that even he thought, at the time of signing, it was a "legitimate process."

"Where's the evidence of any intent that anybody had to commit to crime?" John Freeman, a defense lawyer from Troy, who's representing GOP elector Marian Sheridan of Bloomfield Hills, asked during one of the hearings in 2024.

"It's all wishful thinking," Freeman added. "It's a politically motivated witch hunt that has no basis in the evidence."

Prosecutors have contended that the false certificate itself, social media posts from some of the Republican electors and efforts to submit the false document to the Michigan Legislature and U.S. Congress reveal a scheme to improperly intervene in the 2020 election.

HEALTH

ASK THE PEDIATRICIAN

Prenatal genetic testing and screening: What to consider

By SAMANTHA VERGANO, MD, FAAP
American Academy of Pediatrics (TNS)

When you're expecting a baby, you can also expect to have lots of medical tests. Ultrasound imaging, glucose monitoring and other health checks are a routine part of every pregnancy.

There are reasons you might want to consider genetic testing too, especially if you want to know if a health issue that runs in your family may affect your child. If you're 35 or older, you might worry about risks for genetic conditions (which rise with age).

Whatever your concerns, keep in mind that genetic testing is 100 percent optional. Your decision may reflect your personal beliefs, your family health history and the advice of your health care team.

Typical humans have 26 pairs of chromosomes in every cell. Pairs are formed during conception, when egg and sperm cells come together. One chromosome comes from the mother and one from the father, making matched pairs totaling 46 chromosomes in all.

Variations in the matching process can have a major impact on a child's health. Babies born with an extra chromosome 21 usually have Down syndrome, a condition that changes their facial features, muscle tone, learning abilities and more. In other cases, children can inherit a gene that causes a specific illness. Sickle cell disease is one example of single-gene conditions present at birth. However, both parents would need to be carrying the gene in order for sickle cell to present itself.

Every child born with a genetic condition is different. Some have brain differences that affect learning and development while others have body parts or systems that are formed differently and may not function well. In some cases, genetic disorders cause miscarriage or stillbirth. Still, some have no serious health issues at all.

Prenatal genetic testing supports parents by offering them the gift of time. Knowing beforehand that their child might be born with a health issue or genetic condition can help them cope with powerful emotions and seek much-needed support. It also helps parents make key decisions about their baby's care. Testing can even uncover serious conditions such as a malfunctioning heart – that neonatal surgeons can treat before babies are born.

Health conditions that prenatal genetic testing can reveal include aneuploidy (too many chromosomes), such as Down syndrome, monosomies (missing chromosomes) like Turner syndrome, microdeletions like Williams syndrome that happen when a chromosome or part of a chromosome are missing, and single-gene conditions such as cystic fibrosis, which occurs in the same way sickle cell does with recessive genes from both parents.

Prenatal genetic tests fall into two groups, based on what test results might show. Screening tests use a sample of the pregnant parent's blood to look for elevated risks of genetic conditions. Diagnostic tests go one step further by sampling fluid and tissues inside the womb to gain access to your baby's DNA. These tests can confirm a specific diagnosis.

Biological parents can also be screened before or after conception to see if they are "carriers" for health conditions that run in families. Some parents carry these health risks without knowing it. Both parents should be tested, since babies of two carrier parents have a higher likelihood of being diagnosed with the condition. Carrier screening is not required for future pregnancies, since the results will be noted in each parent's medical records.

Early blood tests on a pregnant parent may be able to detect a higher risk of certain conditions, predominately those that result in too few or too many chromosomes (Turner syndrome or Down syndrome). This test is often referred to as NIPT/S (non-invasive prenatal testing/screening). This only determines a risk and does not provide a definitive diagnosis.

Prenatal genetic testing is a personal choice, but the process of deciding can cause confusion and stress. If you're unsure, talk with your health care team. Your OB-GYN or pediatrician can answer common questions about genetic testing – both the benefits and limitations. Parents can also meet with a genetic counselor to review family risks and learn more about the value of genetic testing.

Your health care team, which might include a genetic counselor or geneticist, can help you make informed decisions about testing and your child's health.

Remember, having a child with a genetic condition does not change their worth as an individual or how much you love them.

Samantha Vergano, MD, FAAP is the chair of the AAP Committee on Genetics and serves as the Associate Medical Director for Outpatient Services in the Division of Genetic Medicine at Seattle Children's Hospital.

MAYO CLINIC Q&A

Are backpacks hurting your kids' backs?

By MAYO CLINIC NEWS NETWORK (TNS)

DEAR MAYO CLINIC: For my kids, the best part of back-to-school shopping is picking out a new backpack. While I want them to have backpacks they like, I also want to make sure they have features that support their backs. What should I look for?

ANSWER: The backpack is as much a part of school life as homework, pencils and recess. Kids use backpacks to carry everything they need during the day and make a fashion statement. Unfortunately, the excess weight of supplies stuffed into an improperly worn backpack may lead to sore joints and muscles.

Dreamstime / TNS

The backpack is as much a part of school life as homework, pencils and recess.

As a new school year begins, follow these tips to help kids take a load off to keep their backs healthy:

■ **Limit the weight:** Students of all ages seem to carry heavier loads in their backpacks. They often tote a day's worth of textbooks, a change of clothing for after-school activities, school projects and lunch. As a result, many parents have heard their school-age children complaining of back pain.

Overall, adults and children shouldn't carry more than 15 percent of their body weight in a backpack. For a 60-pound child, that means a pack weighing less than 9 pounds.

Even when worn properly, your student may need to lean forward to compensate for extra backpack weight. This can affect the natural curve in the lower back. Extra weight also can cause a rounding of the shoulders and an increased curve of the upper back. As a result, children may experience back, shoulder and neck pain.

■ **Adjust them properly:** When worn properly, backpacks are the best way to carry things, especially for long periods of time.

Backpacks should be worn using both straps. Slinging a backpack over one shoulder can cause a person to lean to one side to compensate for the uneven weight, causing a curve in the spine. Over time, this can lead to lower and upper back pain, strained shoulders and neck, and even functional scoliosis (curvature of the spine). Teenage girls are especially susceptible to scoliosis.

Tighten the straps so the pack sits high on your child's back with the top of the pack about even with the shoulder blades. It also should be snug, so it doesn't sway side to side while walking.

When properly worn, the back and abdominal muscles support a backpack. These are the strongest muscles in the body, stabilizing the trunk and holding the body in proper postural alignment. Improper backpack use presents some dangers to young, still-growing joints and muscles.

Key features

Urge your children to look past the color or design when selecting a backpack. These features can make a significant difference in how they feel while wearing the pack at school:

■ **Wide straps:** Wide, padded straps won't dig into the shoulders, and they're more comfortable. Narrow straps can hinder circulation, causing numbness or tingling in the arms, which may lead to weakness in the hands over time.

■ Multiple sections: Select a backpack with many pockets and sections to keep children organized. This also helps distribute the weight more evenly across the pack.

■ **Waist belt:** Tightening the waist belt helps to evenly distribute the weight of the backpack and support children's abdominal muscles.

■ **Lightweight when empty:** Consider the weight of the backpack when it's empty so your children don't have additional weight beyond books and supplies. For example, a canvas backpack will be lighter than leather.

■ **Reflective material:** If your children walk or bike to school, look for a backpack with reflective strips that make them more noticeable to drivers. You also can add strips of reflective tape at home.

Encourage your children to wear their backpacks properly. To help keep them light, they should make frequent stops at their lockers throughout the day to avoid carrying all their books at once. And leave nonessentials at home.

If they're in pain or have discomfort, talk with their primary care clinicians before a problem becomes serious.

– Michelle Rein, M.D., Family Medicine, Mayo Clinic Health System, Caledonia, Minnesota

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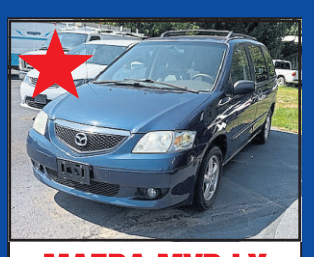

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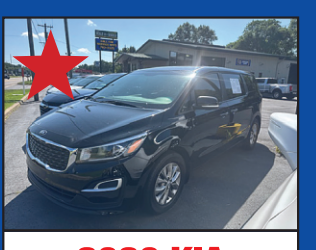

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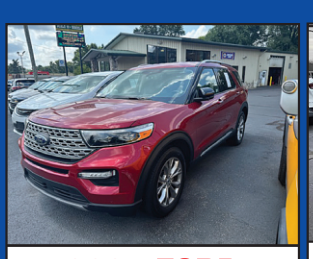

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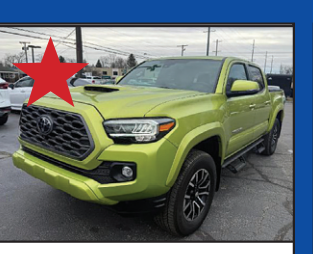

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Sports

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Niles earns first win at Lakeshore with 16-0 shutout

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

STEVENSVILLE — When the going got tough, Brandon Walsh got going.

The Niles sophomore scored two second-half touchdowns that proved to be the difference in a 16-0 win over Lakeshore Friday night, the school's first-ever win at Lakeshore.

"We came out in the second half and took it to them," said Niles Head Coach Scot Shaw. "We're physical enough that we wear teams out – I think we wore them down in the second half. We executed a little bit – we made too many mistakes offensively but we're happy with the shut-out."

The two teams first faced off against each other in 1993 and have played each other every year since, except for the 2021 and 2022 seasons. Lakeshore holds a 28-5 edge in the all-time series, with Niles winning the last two matchups.

The game was tied 0-0 at halftime, in part because of four Niles turnovers forced by Lakeshore's defense. The Lancers recovered three Niles fumbles and intercepted a pass to help the team stay in the game.

"I'm so proud [of the team]," said Lakeshore head coach Danny Thompson. "I don't think anybody gave us a chance. We talked to our kids about not letting outside noise get in their way and they stepped up tonight. I'm not happy with the score, obviously – you never like to lose, but I can't tell you how happy I am with my team and how they fought. They just fought their butts off."

With 2:35 remaining in the third quarter, Walsh punched in a two-yard touchdown run and converted the two-point conversion to give the Vikings a 8-0 lead. With 4:51 remaining In the game, Walsh found the end zone again on a 41-yard score and scored the two-point conversion to seal the deal for the Vikings.

"You think he's down and then all of a sudden you see him quirt out and he's still going," Shaw said of Walsh. "He has a lot of power, he's

See **NILES**, page B1

Tanya Hagen / Leader Publications Contributor

Niles' Brandon Walsh (19) receives the handoff from quarterback Will Turnbull during their Sept. 5 matchup at Lakeshore.

Photo provided

The Cassopolis girls golf team placed second at the second SAC Lakeshore Division Jamboree on Monday at Hawkshead Golf Course in South Haven.

Cassopolis girls golf 2nd, Dowagiac 4th at SAC jamboree

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

SOUTH HAVEN — The Cassopolis girls golf team placed second at the second SAC Lakeshore Division Jamboree on Monday at Hawkshead Golf Course in South Haven.

The host Rams won the jamboree with a team score of 197 and Cassopolis and Kalamazoo Christian tied for second place with a 198. Dowagiac finished in fourth place with a team score of 205.

Dowagiac seniors Jaden Kusch and Bree Behnke tied for second individually with a score of 45. For Cassopolis, junior Aleah Dahlgren tied for sixth with a 47, while senior Alessa Blanchard tied for ninth with a 49.

The third jamboree is scheduled for this Wednesday and will be hosted by Brandywine at Knollwood Country Club.

Brandywine boys tennis 2nd at Paw Paw Quad

PAW PAW — The Brandywine boys tennis team finished second at the Paw Paw Quad on Saturday, Sept. 6.

Paw Paw took first place, Kalamazoo Christian third and Lansing Christian fourth.

Brandywine had two flight champions in Kyler Marshall at No. 3 singles and Malachi Gamble at No. 4 singles.

The team also had two runner-up doubles teams: the No. 2 team of Bryce Hood and Hudson Aalfs, and the No. 3 team of Jordan Bryant and Nolan Shaffer.

Holding on for a win

Don Campbell / HP staff

Edwardsburg's Jesten Gregory breaks through St. Joseph's defense and scores a touchdown during the second half of Friday night's game in St. Joseph.

St. Joseph rally comes up short against Edwardsburg

By BEN SANDERS
For Leader Publications

ST. JOSEPH — St. Joseph's furious rally came just a little too late.

The Bears lost to Edwardsburg 40-37 in their football home opener on Friday. St. Joseph outscored the Eddies 30-11 over the final 18 minutes, but that wasn't enough to overcome three turnovers and Edwardsburg's 369 rushing yards.

"Edwardsburg came in and played a really good game," St. Joseph coach Andrew Pratley said. "We had a hard time figuring it out for a while, and I think once we did we just ran out of time, but way too many mistakes to beat a good team. That's two weeks in a row."

St. Joseph (0-2) fell to Niles 28-18 in its season opener, with two interceptions in the second half proving costly.

Edwardsburg (2-0) led 20-7 at halftime, and was able to extend that lead to 29-7 after recovering fumbles on St. Joseph's first two possessions of the second half.

"We had a couple blocking adjustments we tried to make at halftime, and then we come out and fumble the ball twice in three plays," Pratley said.

Eventually those adjustments began to work and the Bears got going offensively. Sophomore running back Ish Dixon finished with 107 yards and three touchdowns. He scored on runs of 14 yards and 2 yards as St. Joseph trimmed the margin to 29-23 by the end of the third quarter.

"We know St. Joe is a dangerous team, and it got interesting in the second half," Edwardsburg coach Dan Purlee said. "But our kids just kept believing, and kept approaching it one play at a time, and we found a way to get it done."

The Eddies completed just one pass, but it came at a key moment. Facing a 3rd-and-7 at their own 25, Ryland Savoie found Cameron Hayden for 13 yards and the first down. Two plays

See **EDDIES**, page B1

Scott Hassinger / Leader Publications Contributor

Cassopolis freshman Brayden Ivens (12) brings the ball downfield against Kalamazoo Home School's Elliott Lenfield (4) Monday.

Cassopolis boys soccer downs Kalamazoo Home School 3-1

By SCOTT HASSINGER
For Leader Publications

CASSOPOILIS — Cassopolis boys soccer coach Austin Francis can see daily improvement out of his team.

Monday's performance in a 3-1 home win by the Rangers over Kalamazoo Home School was evidence of that.

"I'm really proud of these guys. This is our first win of the season," said Francis, whose Rangers' improved to 1-4-2 overall. "Our last couple matches before tonight were both ties so we're really starting to see some progress. We're starting to win more of the 50-50 balls and challenging the other team more now."

With just one lone senior – William Westrate – on the roster the future is looking very promising for Cassopolis boys' soccer. In fact 11 of the Rangers' 16-man roster are either sophomores or freshmen. There are only four juniors on the squad.

Coming off a 3-3 tie at Howardsville Christian School on Saturday, Cassopolis scored all the goals it would need in the opening 40 minutes against the Cougars.

Cassopolis grabbed a 1-0 lead less than four minutes into the match after sophomore Matthew Clendenin scored at 35:16 off an assist from classmate Landon Burns.

Westrate made it 2-0 at 21:54 of the first half when he blasted a shot past Cougars' netminder Ethan Boettcher with Burns racking up his second assist of the night.

Burns got into the scoring act with 19:25 left in the half with a shot into the left corner of the net. Sophomore Aiden Purcell was credited with the assist for the Rangers.

Kalamazoo Home School notched its first goal late in the half when Micah Ullman scored unassisted with 10:54 left in the half.

"The boys came out passing pretty well at the

See **CASSOPOLIS**, page B1

Tanya Hagen / Leader Publications Contributor

NILES

From page B2

hard to take down and he just made some great runs."

The Vikings outgained the Lancers 296-52 in total yards, including a Niles 266-29 edge in rushing yards. Niles totaled 18 first downs compared to Lakeshore's two. Tristan Williams had eight carries for 28 yards to lead Lakeshore and quarterback Eli Wheaton completed 3 of 9 passes for 23 yards.

Niles quarterback Will Turnbull completed 4 of 7 passes for 30 yards and one interception. Elijah Norris had 126 yards on 23 carries and Alex Anderson had eight carries for 48 yards while Walsh had 88 on 12 carries and his two scores.

On defense, Chayce Quinn, Bradley Wolverton, Jayelin Vawter, RJ Fiedler and Ward Cheney tallied three tackles each for Niles. Derek Petzke had 14 total tackles for Lakeshore and Drew Scholten, Kaden Griffiths totaled 13 and 12 tackles respectively and Wyatt Florian hauled in an interception.

While the loss was disappointing, Thompson was pleased with his team's effort against a strong Niles team and saw the game as a building block the team will use going forward.

"You look at their offense and they're good at what they do," Thompson said. "They're great up front, they just came off of an appearance in the state championship and I think their roster is better this year than they were last year. The thing is when you're the underdog, nobody believes in you and you have to believe in yourself. I think what we saw today, we saw that if we play Lancer football, then we can play with anybody. It's going to be a building block for us.

"We'll lick our wounds – our kids battled and their hurt – so I'm gonna give them the day off tomorrow and Sunday and we're gonna come back Monday with a game plan. We've got another tough one with Portage Central coming."

EDDIES

From page B2

later, Hayden broke free for a 59-yard touchdown run, and the two-point conversion made it 37-23.

St. Joseph answered quickly with a 58-yard touchdown pass from Hudson Corning to Nate Schmitt. The Bears' two-point try came up just short, leaving the score at 37-29 with 8:59 left.

Edwardsburg killed most of the clock on its next drive, going 46 yards in 12 plays, most of them runs by Cale Myers.

"Our offensive line did a really good job tonight," Purlee said. "We weren't perfect by any means, but we moved the ball consistently and were able to control the clock."

The Eddies lined up to run a play on 4th-and-goal from the St. Joseph 4-yard line, but after a false start penalty, they brought on kicker Zachariah Jacobs, who nailed the 25-yard field goal to make it a two-score game at 40-29 with 2:28 left and the Bears out of timeouts.

"He's a first-year kicker, soccer player," Purlee said. "He came up huge tonight, I'm proud of that kid."

Don Campbell / HP staff

St. Joseph's Ish Dixon pushes past Edwardsburg's Alex Rudolph during the second half of Friday night's game in St. Joseph.

St. Joseph drove down the field with Corning and Schmitt linking up several times, setting up Dixon for a 5-yard scoring run. The Eddies recovered the ensuing onside kick, however, and were able to kneel out the clock.

Corning threw for 217 yards and two touchdowns, including a 70-yarder to Caden LeClear in the first half, and Schmitt finished with six receptions for 112 yards.

Giovanni Orue led Edwardsburg with 115 rushing yards and two touchdowns, including a 51-yarder for the game's opening score. Myers ran for 96 yards and Hayden added 91.

Both teams are on the road next week for conference openers. Edwardsburg is at Sturgis (0-2) in Wolverine Conference play, while St. Joseph travels to Kalamazoo Loy Norrix (1-1) in Southwestern Michigan Athletic Conference action.

"We've got a chance to be really good still," Pratley said. "We just haven't gotten there yet. We've got to get out of our own way."

EDWARDSBURG 40, ST. JOSEPH 37

Edwardsburg	12	8	9	11	— 40
St. Joseph	7	0	16	14	— 37

First quarter

E – Giovanni Orue 51 run (kick failed), 9:45.
E – Ryland Savoie 1 run (run failed), 3:23.
SJ – Caden LeClear 70 pass from Hudson Corning (Wes Hudson kick), 1:55.

Second quarter

E – Giovanni Orue 4 run (Orue pass from Savoie), 3:14.

Third quarter

E – Jesten Gregory 23 run (pass failed), 10:36.
E – Zachariah Jacobs 27 field goal, 6:21.
SJ – Ish Dixon 14 run (Dixon run), 4:51.
SJ – Dixon 2 run (Gabe King run), 0:37.

Fourth quarter

E – Cameron Hayden 59 run (Gregory run), 9:54.
SJ – Nate Schmitt 58 pass from Corning (run failed), 8:59.
E – Jacobs 25 field goal, 2:28.
SJ – Dixon 5 run (Dixon run), 0:50.
Records – Edwardsburg 2-0, St. Joseph 0-2.

Contact: bsanders@TheHP.com, 429-1294, Twitter: @HPBenSanders

Bears all but shut door on staying in city

By ANDREW SELIGMAN
Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Chicago Bears all but slammed the door on building an enclosed stadium in the city, with team president Kevin Warren writing in a letter to fans on Monday that the team's "future home" is in suburban Arlington Heights.

"Moving outside of the city of Chicago is not a decision we reached easily," Warren said. "This project does not represent us leaving, it represents us expanding.

The Bears draw fans from all over Illinois, and over 50 percent of our season-ticket holders live within 25 miles of the Arlington Heights site."

The Bears sent the letter hours before their season opener against the Minnesota Vikings.

Warren made it clear the team is committed to building a stadium, saying "this is the year" to finalize plans so the team could bid to host a Super Bowl "as soon as 2031." He said the stadium would "require zero state money for construction," but the team would need the legislature to pass a bill in October to start construction this year.

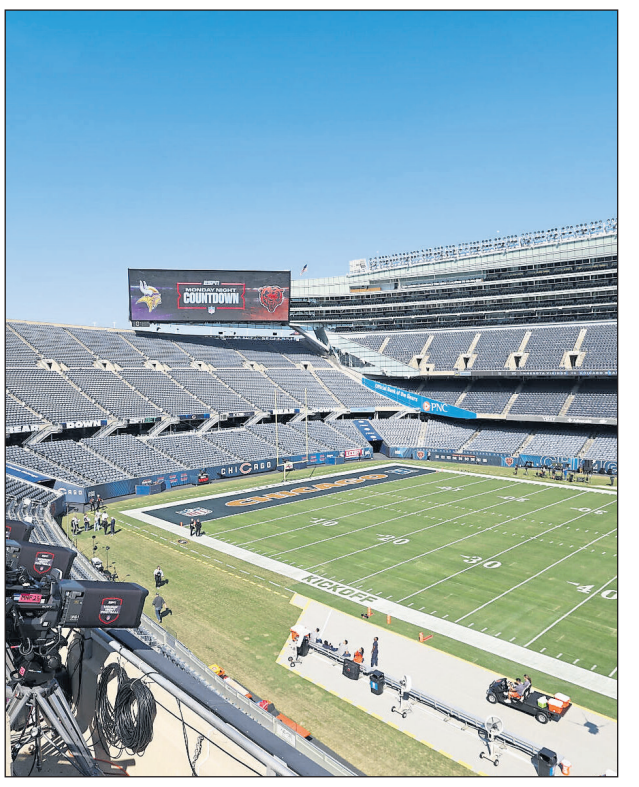
That bill would freeze property taxes for large-scale construction projects like the stadium. Warren maintains the bill could create 56,000 jobs during construction and 9,000 permanent jobs.

The Bears' focus for a new home has fluctuated between a tract of land they own in Arlington Heights to the city, and then back to the suburb.

In September 2022, they unveiled a nearly $5 billion plan for Arlington Heights that also called for restaurants, retail and more, when they were finalizing the purchase of that site 30 miles from Soldier Field. Their focus moved toward building a new stadium next to Soldier Field after Warren was hired as president two years ago to replace the retiring Ted Phillips. The plan to transform Chicago's Museum Campus got an enthusiastic endorsement from Mayor Brandon Johnson but a tepid reception from Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker and state legislators when it was announced in April 2024.

Last spring, the team announced it was turning its attention back to Arlington Heights, citing "significant progress" with local leaders.

Since moving to Chicago in 1921, the Bears have never owned their stadium, whether playing at Wrigley Field from 1921 to 1970 or Soldier Field since then.



Kamil Krzaczynski / AP

Monday Night Football cameras are ready for a game between the Chicago Bears and Minnesota Vikings on Monday.

CASSOPOLIS

From page B2

beginning of the match. I'm not sure if the other team (Cougars) settled in or if our kids relaxed too much there in the second half," Francis said.

"The first couple matches this year we took too many seconds getting the ball in and now we're actually pressuring other teams immediately and that gives us more possessions. Our kids are communicating more as well."

Francis and his team attended Sunday's NCAA Division I match in South Bend between host Notre Dame University and Indiana University.

"I don't know how much that game played into our match tonight but it's a higher caliber play and they see how much college players communicate. I can coach that, but for our kids to see it is really helpful," Francis said.

The second half turned into a defensive battle with neither team being able to find the back of the net despite multiple scoring opportunities.

Kalamazoo Home School recorded 11 shots on goals to just six for Cassopolis. But it was the Rangers who made their shots count.

Francis was equally proud of his Rangers at the defensive end of the field, especially junior goal keeper Alan Wegner who registered a total of 11 saves in the match.

"Alan is very vocal and has done a nice job of rotating his body quickly to protect himself. He does what he has to in order to make some great saves against opposing strikers," Francis said.

Cassopolis had four corner kicks and scored off one of those.

The Cougars had two corner kicks themselves.

Francis also credited the play of Landon Burns, the team's top striker, along with Westrate who played almost the full 80 minutes each match.

"William maintains our midfield a lot and is our vocal leader there. Logan Burns, our center back, also had a solid match. Matthew is one of our other strikers that's progressed alot as well this season," Francis said.

Scott Hassinger / Leader Publications Contributor

Elijah Wagoner (17) from Cassopolis uses some fancy footwork to keep the ball in bounds and away from Tyler Bos (60) from Kalamazoo Home School.

Cassopolis has six players who also play on the school's varsity football team. They include Westrate, Wegner, Elijah Wagoner, CJ Conrad, Jayden Pflug and Mason Nelson. Wagoner and Nelson's primary sport is football while the others concentrate mostly on soccer.

Boettcher ended up with three saves for the Cougars.

Winning a district championship is the No. 1 goal for Cassopolis this season.

"Our school has never won a district championship so that's high on our list," Francis said.

The Rangers have lost twice in the district finals in Francis' 12 years as head coach.

"I feel like with this group there is a different kind of mentality. On Saturday we were down 3-1 against Howardsville Christian and came back to tie it. These kids never give up and our motto this year is 'Do It Anyway'. There are times in life where things are going to be tough and you have to step up and do something anyway. This is a very cohesive group. We've been coaching these kids to be more of a possession team. Lots of jabs wear the opposing team down," Francis said. "The development of our junior high program which began five years ago is going to help the culture of our high school program out tremendously."

Cassopolis visits Comstock Wednesday for a

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Friend's complex needs strain friendship

R. Eric Thomas
Asking Eric

DEAR ERIC: "Bella" and I met more than 35 years ago as volunteers. We maintained a friendship despite totally different life paths: she had a string of relationships that never went very far; I married, became a stepmom, then had a baby.

She wasn't able to maintain a career due to increasing mental health issues that also affected her physical health. She became a recluse for two years.

I have deep appreciation for the complexities that mental illness brings. I know that love and compassion are what Bella needs and that they are the basis upon which this friendship has existed.

I set aside my needs because I know that she hasn't the capacity for anything beyond her own complex needs. I learned this the hard way years ago when she stood me up for a lunch date at a restaurant after I had just suffered the agonizing loss of a late-term pregnancy. She admitted she decided to attend a social affair instead; it never occurred to her I needed a friend and support.

Do I love her? Of course. But ... I'm tired. I've been doing this my entire life and my tank is empty; I have nothing left to offer this friendship. I feel awful saying this.

Over the last few years, I've avoided getting together because it's emotionally and mentally exhausting, but she keeps asking for us to visit. How do I navigate boundaries with truth for me and compassion for her? – Want to Be a Friend

DEAR FRIEND: Ask yourself what you need from this friendship, without the asterisk of what Bella can provide. I wonder if, in the past, you pushed down your own needs too many times, in deference to Bella's needs. That's going to wear thin quickly because the friendship becomes unbalanced and remains so.

It's not too late to move this from a service relationship to one that serves both of you. Maybe you need a phone conversation rather than a visit. Maybe you need to talk through some of the things she did in the past and hear her acknowledge that they were hurtful.

You can be compassionate and still advocate for yourself. Part of this advocacy comes with knowing that she may not be able to give you all that you need. But it starts with letting yourself want it and then asking for it.

DEAR ERIC: Should I tell my sister that her son, "Noah," a recent college grad looking for a job, comes across as entitled in a job interview? This may be the reason he is still hunting for a job a full year after graduation when his peers have secured positions.

I am aware of this remark because a friend of a friend of mine is a manager of a company where Noah interviewed. Although my contact did not directly interview him, he received feedback from his managers. The two managers who separately interviewed Noah both reported that although he seemed eager for the job and qualified, he came across as entitled and privileged.

My sister is protective of him and is very sensitive that he's been unsuccessful in finding a job after more than a year. When our mother asked about why it has taken so long for Noah to get a job, my sister barked at her and said, "It's a highly competitive market!"

Should I let my sister know of the comments I heard, even though I believe she will become defensive? I understand that the comments are not firsthand. Should I talk to Noah? Or shall I just keep my thoughts to myself and let my nephew experience a bit of real life and rejection on his own? – Concerned Aunt

DEAR AUNT: Talking to Noah directly is best. This way you sidestep your sister's defensiveness and can have a constructive conversation with Noah that may benefit him more. Ask his permission first – i.e., I have a friend of a friend at X company; are you open to hearing feedback about your interview?" He may say that he's not interested; if so, respect that.

Before you talk to Noah, however, figure out what information is actionable. Less helpful: "stop being entitled." More helpful: "based on the feedback that I received, try emphasizing this aspect of your personality more in interviews." Because this information comes through multiple links in a game of Telephone, telling him what you heard will probably not be as useful to him as advising him how he might avoid giving off similar impressions in the future.

Even if he's not as defensive as your sister, searching for a job can be a sensitive and grueling process. Hearing feedback about your performance can be even more so. So, root all of your comments in a shared desire for the world to see his promise.

Send questions to R. Eric Thomas at eric@askingeric.com or P.O. Box 22474, Philadelphia, PA 19110.

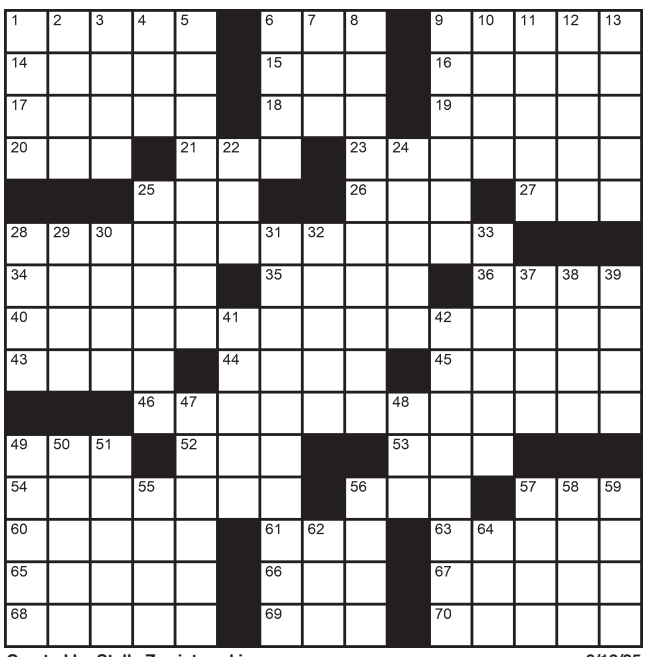
CRYPTOQUOTE

One letter stands for another. In this sample – **AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW** – A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

UDHUD PHDEN GPJ LANS TJEJSGIXJ CUDASN.

— BUUQHJ YUDNSJP

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

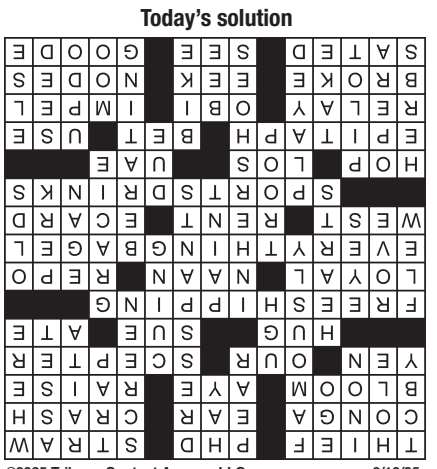


Created by Stella Zawistowski 9/13/25

ACROSS
1 Robber
6 Advanced degree: Abbr.
9 Drinking utensil
14 Cuban line dance
15 Serving of corn
16 Computer failure
17 Begin to flower
18 Yes vote
19 Uplift
20 Strong desire
21 First word of the Lord's Prayer
23 Royal staff
25 Embrace
26 Bird of basketball
27 Consumed
28 Amazon Prime offering: 2 wds.
34 Steadfast
35 Indian flatbread
36 Seized property, for short
40 All-inclusive breakfast roll: 2 wds.
43 Wheeling, __ Virginia
44 Payment to a landlord
45 Online greeting
46 Gatorade and Propel: 2 wds.
49 Bunny's jump
52 __ Angeles
53 Dubai's land: Abbr.
54 Tombstone inscription
56 Wager
57 "__ it or lose it"
60 Race with legs
61 Japanese sash
63 Force onward
65 Shattered
66 "Oh no! A mouse!"
67 Lymphatic system parts
68 Totally full
69 Meet with
70 "Johnny B. __"

DOWN
1 Pinkberry competitor
2 Golf target
3 Informed of: 2 wds.
4 Sense of self
5 In a renowned way
6 Anjou or Bosc fruit
7 Dried grass
8 Bottom of some suits: 2 wds.
9 TV feature
10 Golf hazard
11 Savory yogurt dip
12 Good quality
13 "__ was I?"
22 "Gross!"
24 Prompting
25 Red card suit
28 Went by plane
29 Roam all over
30 Looks over
31 2002 Jennifer Weiner novel: 3 wds.
32 Wall coating
33 Skater Gold
37 Author Jennifer
38 Job benefit
39 Alero maker
41 Scouting group
42 Yelling at
47 Had some fun
48 Expected in
49 Green seasonings
50 Sung musical drama
51 First episode of a show
55 Give and __
56 Vehicle with pedals
57 High hairstyle
58 Sesame-__ bun
59 If not
62 Spelling contest
64 Cow's sound

Today's solution



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Cryptoquote solution JUST VEGETABLE DONUTS. — COOKIE MONSTER
ONION RINGS ARE

			2					
2			8	5				9
	6			3		4	8	
8		9	4			2	3	
	3	4			2	8		7
	5	6		2			9	
3				9	5			6
					7			

SUDOKU

How to play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

HOROSCOPE

SEPT. 13

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Voicing your ideas could land you in the middle of a power struggle, sidestep it if you don't want to engage. Pointing people toward helpful tasks could help defuse the situation. Future plans for your home could be on the drawing board.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Money can create some of the worst tangles between people, there's a possibility for a cash grab or shady move. Use your mind, not your feelings, to navigate. An explanation offered without emotional charge could allow a situation to move forward.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Something could trigger an anxiety but that doesn't mean anything negative is afoot – a temporary push toward fear in the stars isn't the same as a real risk. A lot could be building behind the scenes even if some parts of life feel stalled out.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Consider speaking truth to power, people can only make good choices when they know the facts. If an old fear gets triggered you could see a path to healing it for good. If dating, ignore fantasies and wishful thinking.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) If friends are tangling, sidestep any mess and don't get drawn in. Resistance to sharing or teamwork may begin to dissolve soon. A confident partner could have the answers or skills you need. Smile for a selfie, looking good today!

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Luck, smarts, and hard work all play a role in building your success. If it's a day off, don't let work concerns creep in quite yet. Be the one who can express or understand what is needed if someone else is feeling lost.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Skip out on non-essential tasks if you can and get some sun on your skin and wind in your hair. Leave power plays in the dust and head for the horizon at least for a few hours. Tune in to nature to soothe your soul.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Time spent in conversation with homies could be the best thing about today – they could be filled with fun ideas and interesting, helpful intel. Use intelligence and not triggered feelings to navigate a financial situation.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Shifts in power in a long-term relationship could feel disconcerting, build yourself an evolving outlook to make sense of things rather than allowing yourself to react. You might benefit from some career staging during the weekend.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) A friend or a friend group could be tempted to fool around and find out, don't allow peer pressure to lead you astray. It could be hard to get your point across but things could fall into place anyway under today's generally strong stars.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Create and play today if you can, you need fun and physical action both. If a partner is pushing too hard, make boundaries clear and uphold them. Giving to someone in need in any form can bring benefits beyond a warm heart.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Try not to get too emotionally invested in a situation or power struggle you can't control, let them work it out for themselves. Pushing too hard to make a day trip happen might not help, it could be hard to make your escape today.

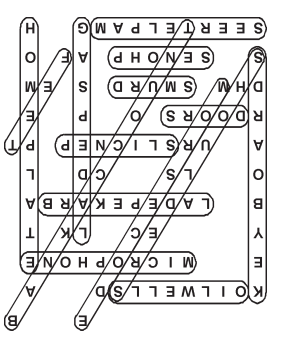
Sudoku solution

8	5	3	7	4	6	2	9	1
6	2	7	5	9	1	8	4	3
4	9	1	8	2	3	6	5	7
7	8	6	2	1	9	4	3	5
1	4	8	3	5	2	9	7	6
5	3	9	4	6	7	1	2	8
9	6	5	1	3	4	7	8	2
2	7	4	6	8	5	3	1	9
3	1	2	9	7	8	5	6	4

Jumble solution

BUDDY SHEEP SHADOW BONNET
Flying kites with the family had its — UPS AND DOWNS

Sleuth solution



JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

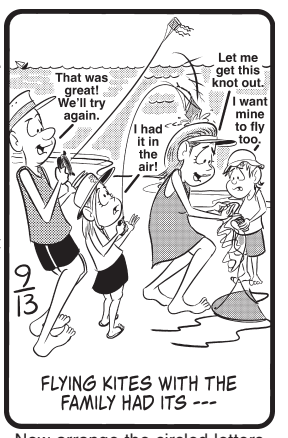
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DBYUD

SPEHE

HASWOD

NBTEON


That was great! We'll try again.
I had it in the air!
Let me get this knot out.
I want mine to fly too.
9/13
FLYING KITES WITH THE FAMILY HAD ITS ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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WORD SLEUTH • THINGS WE TAP

V W F T R P M K I F E D B Y B
K O I L W E L L S D W U S A Q
E O N M M I C R O P H O N E K
Y I G F D B E C Z X L K W T U
B S E L A D E P E K A R B A Q
O O R N L S L J H C D F D L C
A A S U R S L I C N E P Y P T
R D O O R S W O V T P S Q E P
D H M N S M U R D L S K E M I
S H F S E N O H P E A F C O B
S E E R T E L P A M G Z Y H W

Friday's unlisted clue: TALENT

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Saturday's unlisted clue hint: **Slender Jointed Parts of the Hand**

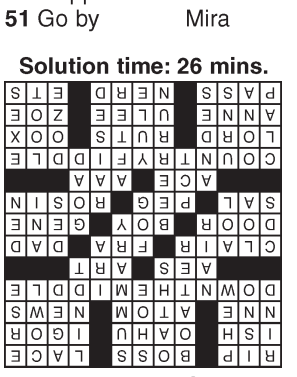
Bank account
Brake pedal
Doors
Drums
Feet
Gas pedal
Home plate
Keyboards
Maple trees
Microphone
Morse code
Oil wells
Pencils
Phones
Shoulders

SHEFFER CROSSWORD

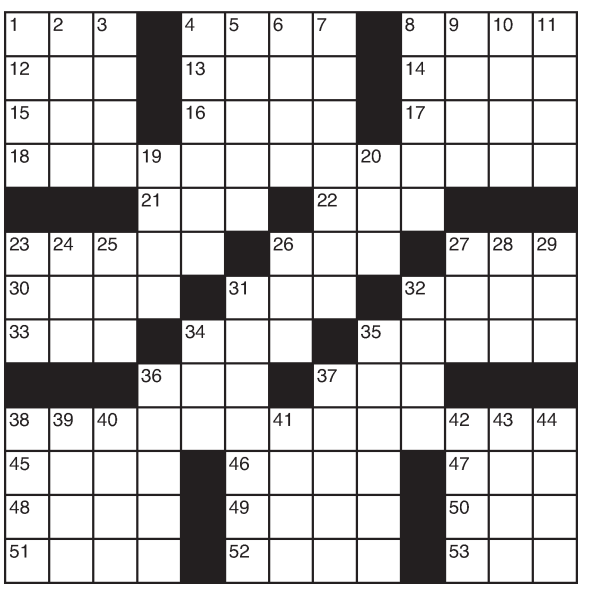
ACROSS
1 Patch target
4 Employer
8 Valentine border
12 "Kinda" suffix
13 Diamond Head locale
14 Borodin's "Prince —"
15 SSW opposite
16 Physics bit
17 Reporter's quest
18 Into two equal parts
21 DDE's opponent
22 Illustrations
23 "— de Lune"
26 Monk's title
27 June honoree
30 Place for a wreath
31 Lad
32 Chromosome part
33 Pitcher Maglie
34 Wooden pin
35 Cello bow application
36 Expert
37 Small battery
38 Hoedown instrument
45 Byron or Tennyson
46 Trenches
47 Tic-tac-toe loser
48 Novelist Rice
49 Peter Fonda role
50 Orange Muppet
51 Go by
52 Dweeb
53 Roswell visitors

DOWN
1 Peel
2 "Money — object"
3 "That was close!"
4 Straw hat
5 Solemn promises
6 Pump, e.g.
7 Recap
8 Swiss chocolate brand
9 Mellowed
10 Monk's hood
11 Gaelic
19 "Queen of Katwe" director Mira
20 Writer Levin
23 LP successors
24 Mauna —
25 "You've got mail" ISP
26 Boating hazard
27 — Moines
28 Blackbird
29 Comfy family room
31 Quick trip for a six-pack
32 Incite
34 Agt.'s cut
35 Elevated
36 Peaks of Peru
37 Pursuing
38 Applaud
39 Actress Chaplin
40 Coffee vessels
41 Christmas
42 Take a nap
43 Booty
44 Alimony recipients

Solution time: 26 mins.



Today's solution



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POND/LAKE
Eco-Friendly Pond & Lake weed removal tools. Veteran made in Michigan. Visist our website www.WeedGatorProducts.com or call 989-529-3992. 5% discount code GATOR5.

Replace your roof with the best looking and longest lasting materials - steel from Erie Metal Roofs! Three styles and multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited Time Offer- 50% off installation + Additional 10% off install (for military, health workers & 1st responders.) Call Erie Metal Roofs: 1-888-718-1856

No more cleaning out gutters. Guaranteed! Call LeafFilter today 1-844-369-2501 to schedule Free inspection, no obligation estimate. Plus get 20% off! Seniors, military save additional 10%. Restrictions apply, see representative for warranty, offer details

BATH & SHOWER UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call: 1-833-776-0121

Donate your car, truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-877-691-4117 today!

ATTENTION OXYGEN THERAPY USERS! Discover Oxygen Therapy That Moves with you with Inogen Portable Oxygen Concentrators. FREE information kit. Call 1-833-661-2853.

Acculeval. Your foundation repair and basement waterproofing experts. Whether basement, crawl space or concrete slab we'll guide you on the right path to a healthy home. Act Now! Up to $600 off. Restrictions apply. Call for a free consultation. 1-844-700-4986

We Buy Houses for cash AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-855-504-0056

SunSetter. America's Number One Awning! Instant shade at the touch of a button. Transform your deck or patio into an outdoor oasis. Up to 10-year limited warranty. Call now and SAVE $350 today! 1-855-848-7401

WANTED STANDING TIMBER
Large Michigan lumber manufacturer seeking land owners with 25 or more mature hardwood trees to sell. Call (517) 566-8061 qualityhardwoodsinc.com

0150 GARAGE /ESTATE SALES

ESTATE SALE

SEPTEMBER 19-21
8AM-4PM

2686 STAR AVE
NILES MI,
OFF OF BARRON LAKE RD.

ENTIRE HOUSE & GARAGE
PLUS MCDONALDS "BEANIES",
DISNEY ORNAMENTS,
TOOLS, GENERATORS,
HEATERS,
NEW HOSPITAL BED,
LIFT, SHOWER CHAIR,
COMMODE,
JAZZY POWER CHAIR

MOVING SALE!
2216 REDBIRD LANE
NILES
September 11th - 13th
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

WOOD STOVE, TALL BOOKCASES, INSTAPOT, MEAT SLICER, LAWN EQUIPMENT, KAYAK, LIFE JACKETS, CLOTHING, PURSES, HUMMEL COLLECTOR PLATES, IRENE SPENCER ARTWORK, KINCAID COLLECTIBLES, BOOKS AND MUCH MORE!

0200 EMPLOYMENT

JOB OPENING-STAFF
The City of Dowagiac is accepting applications for the full-time position of Staff Accountant.
www.cityofdowagiac.com

0300 PETS

FREE
TWO MALE GUINEA PIGS
With all accessories
(269) 228-5742

0500 MERCHANDISE

FOR SALE BY OWNER

JOHN DEERE
HEAVY DUTY MOWER
MODEL 403
WITH EXTRA SET OF BLADES
ASKING $500.00 CASH
NO CHECKS

ROTEMEC 5 FT MOWER
3PT HITCH,
RIGHT HAND DISCHARGE
ASKING $500.00 CASH
NO CHECKS

CALL 574-250-9094
AFTER 4 PM M-F

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Berrien Springs, MI 49103

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and accessories
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$2,000 for all
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AND MORE!
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Booths Available Now Renting from $75+!
Yoho's Treasure Market!
1420 S 11th St.
Niles, MI 49120
Contact Laura Yoho
574-323-0423

0600 REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

WANTED TO RENT

Needed Year Round Storage in Niles area for car, motorcycle and other garage items.
Call 574-361-2535

0600 REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

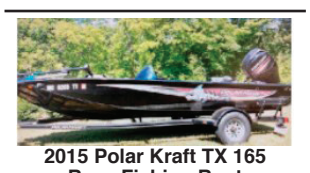
WANTED TO RENT

Looking for large storage space in Niles or Buchanan area. All items are clean, no junk. Call (269) 262-0162

0800 TRANSPORTATION

1979 Starcraft 18'
Aluminum Deep V
110 HP Johnson & Trailer.
(269) 683-2400

1999 Kawasaki Voyager 12 Touring Bike
New Carlisle area.
Good condition. 80k road miles.
$2,000 firm.
Call 574-220-4275
or 574-234-8038



2015 Polar Kraft TX 165 Bass Fishing Boat

Boat has low mileage.
Seller mainly used the trolling motor. Didn't have much time for fishing. Price is for boat, Trailmaster trailer, trolling motor, Mercury BigFoot 60 HP boat motor and fish finder equipment. If I don't answer, leave message. Pictures available via text.
$17,900 or best offer.
574-850-1938
269-228-1216

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BERRIEN COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-0626-DE-M

Court address: 811 Port Street, St. Joseph, Michigan 49085
Court phone no. 269-983-7111

Estate of Robert Perry Goetz
Date of birth: 10/24/1951

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Robert Perry Goetz, died 03/03/2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Robert Goetz and Michael Goetz, co-personal representative, or to both the probate court at 811 Port Street, St. Joseph, Michigan 49085 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: 09/04/2025

Attorney: John R. Colip
Bar no. P25250
12 Longmeadow Village Drive, Suite 100
Niles, MI 49120
269-591-6915

Robert Goetz & Michael Goetz
Personal representatives
33 Muller Road
Newton, NJ 07860 &
5886 Mountain Road
Coloma, MI 49038
269-369-5805

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
Cass COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-189-DE
Hon. Carol M. Bealor

Estate of: RONALD E. LERNER

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Ronald E. Lerner, died 06-25-2025. Creditors of the decedent is notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Elizabeth L. Groulx personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62 North, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date September 2, 2025

William L. LaBre, J.D. P27857
Attorney name **Bar no.**
68897 So. Cass St, PO. Box 550
Address
Edwardsburg, MI 49112
City, state, zip
269-663-8554
Telephone no.

Elizabeth L. Groulx
Personal representative name
Edwardsburg, MI 49112
City, state, zip
269-580-4972
Telephone no.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
Cass County Council on Aging (Cass COA)
Adult Day Services Addition and Renovation Project
Architects Project Number: 2025.001

Sealed bids will be received by the Cass County Council on Aging at CARMI Design Group, LLC, 210 E. Main Street, Suite 200, Niles, MI 49120 until 12:00 PM local time, October 8, 2025. Bids will not be opened publicly. The Project consists of the construction of a new Adult Day Services Addition and the Renovation of a portion of the existing Cass COA facility, including all general trades, mechanical, electrical, and site work as indicated in the Contract Documents. Proposed facility shall include a drive under drop-off canopy, as well as an outdoor covered patio area. The proposed building will have a large, open living room, dining room, kitchen (with commercial hood), an office, washer/dryer, accessible toilet rooms, and showers.
Bidding documents for a Stipulated Sum contract, including electronic (PDF) drawings and project manual, will be available beginning Monday, September 8, 2025 at the Builders Exchange of Kalamazoo, MACIAF of South Bend, or may be obtained from the Office of the Architect . All questions are to be directed to the Office of the Architect at cadmin@carmi.biz, attention Matt Neuerburg.
Bidders will be required to provide Bid security in the form of a Bid Bond of a sum no less than 5 percent of the Bid Amount.
A pre-bid meeting will be held on September 17, 2025 at 9:00 AM local time, at the project site: 60525 Decatur Rd, Cassopolis, MI 49031. Attendance is mandatory.
All work for this project is subject to the requirements of the Davis-Bacon Act and the applicable U.S. Department of Labor prevailing wage rates, which are included in the Contract Documents.
Offers will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.
The Owner reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive irregularities, and to accept the bid which, in its opinion, is in the best interest of the Owner.

0900 LEGALS

The Cass County Conservation District is announcing our upcoming Board of Directors Election on 12/2/2025

Join the efforts to improve Cass County natural resources by running for the five-member board. Two 4-year term positions will be on the ballot

Nomination forms are due to the Cass County Conservation District at 1127 East State St Cassopolis, MI 49031 by 10/1/2025

Applications can be found on our website: **casscdistrict.org**

We look forward to you joining our team!

CITY OF NILES

Please take notice that the City Council of the City of Niles, Michigan, on September 8, 2025, adopted Ordinance No. 517 which amends Ordinance Number 513, Section 54-534 (j)(4) b.1 to allow adult use marihuana businesses to transact business between 5:00am (05:00 hours) and 12:00am (24:00 hours).

ORDINANCE #517
Effective Date: September 28, 2025

Notice is further given that a true copy of the Ordinance is available to the public to be obtained or inspected during business hours at the office of the City Clerk, 333 North 2nd Street, Niles, Michigan. This notice is published pursuant to the provisions of MCL 117.3(k).

Tina Bergman, City Clerk

CITY OF NILES

Please take notice that the City Council of the City of Niles, Michigan, on September 8, 2025, adopted Ordinance No. 518 which amends Ordinance Number 514, Section 54-514 (a)(2) to allow medical marihuana businesses to transact business between 5:00am (05:00 hours) and 12:00am (24:00 hours).

ORDINANCE #518
Effective Date: September 28, 2025

Notice is further given that a true copy of the Ordinance is available to the public to be obtained or inspected during business hours at the office of the City Clerk, 333 North 2nd Street, Niles, Michigan. This notice is published pursuant to the provisions of MCL 117.3(k).

Tina Bergman, City Clerk

0900 LEGALS

CITY OF NILES

Please take notice that the City Council of the City of Niles, Michigan, on September 8, 2025, adopted Ordinance No. 519 which amends a system for collecting delinquent electric, water, and/or wastewater service charges within the City of Niles, Michigan.

ORDINANCE #519
Effective Date: September 28, 2025

Notice is further given that a true copy of the Ordinance is available to the public to be obtained or inspected during business hours at the office of the City Clerk, 333 North 2nd Street, Niles, Michigan. This notice is published pursuant to the provisions of MCL 117.3(k).

Tina Bergman, City Clerk

Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network's Public Hearing 2025-2026 Proposed Budget

Who: Cass County Residents

When: Tuesday, September 23RD, 2025

Times: 5:00 to 5:15 p.m.

Where: Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network
960 M-60 East, Cassopolis, MI

Why: To gather input from residents about the proposed budget. The regularly scheduled WBHN Board meeting will begin following the Public Hearing. A copy of the budget may be obtained at 960 M60 East, Cassopolis, MI 49031; 269-445-2451.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for that party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM on SEPTEMBER 24, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Jack Collett and Breanna Clark, as joint tenants, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for United Federal Credit Union, Mortgagee, dated August 24, 2021 and recorded August 25, 2021 in Liber 1202, Page 742 and Loan Modification Agreement recording on January 26, 2023, in Liber 1228, Page 888, Cass County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Nationstar Mortgage LLC, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Ninety-One Thousand One Hundred Thirty and 86/100 Dollars ($191,130.86).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statue in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgage premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Cass County, Michigan at 10:00 AM on SEPTEMBER 24, 2025. Said premises are located in the Township of Milton, Cass County Michigan, and are described as: Part of the West Fractional Half of the West Half of Section 18, Township 8 South, Range 16 West, Milton Township, Cass County, Michigan described as follows: Commencing 2347.8 feet South and 375.81 feet West of the Northeast corner of the West Half of the West Half of said Section 18; thence South 581.8 feet; thence West 150 feet; thence East 150 Feet to the place of commencing.
33822 Bertrand St, Niles, Michigan 49120
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: August 23, 2025
File No. 25-010575
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Form Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(08-23)(09-13)

Dowagiac Daily News: Aug. 23, 30, Sept 6 and 13, 2025
1569742 COLLETT

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN IN THE 43RD CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF CASS SIMPLIFY REAL ESTATE, LLC a foreign limited liability company, Plaintiff, v THOMISON GROUP, LLC, a foreign limited liability company, and MATTHEW L. THOMISON, joint and several, Defendants. HON. CAROL M. BEALOR CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE CASE NO.: 24-000635-CH Gary D. Popovits (P63861) PEZZETTI, VERMETTEN, POPOVITS & UMULIS, P.C.

Attorneys for Plaintiff 600 E. Front Street Suite 102- P.O. Box 5817 Traverse City, MI 49696-5817 (231)929-3450. NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE 1. On June 2,2025, the Circuit Court for the County of Cass, State of Michigan, entered a Judgment of Foreclosure in the matter (the "Judgment" in Case No. 24-00635-CH) in favor of Simplify Real Estate, LLC ("Simplify") and against Defendants, Thomison Group, LLC, a foreign limited liability company, and Matthew L. Thomison ("Defendants) in the above referenced matter. 2. As of the date of the notice, the Judgment in the amount of $211,495.46, plus interest from enrty of the judgment and all allowable costs in this action, remains unsatisfied. Therefore, pursuant to the terms of the Judgment, on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at a public auction to be held in at the Cass County Law & Courts Building Lobby, I shall offer for sale to the highest bidder all of the right, title and interest of the Defendants in and to the real property described as follows: Land Situated in the City of Dowagiac, County of Cass and State of Michigan, and more fully described as follows: Lot Numbered 22, Patrick Hamilton's Addition to the Village (now City) of Dowagiac, according to the plat thereof as recorded in Liber L of Deeds, Page 219, Cass County Records. Commonly Known as: 208 W. Division Street, Dowagiac, Michigan 49047 Parcel Number:14-160-200-273-00. 3. The sale of the Property shall be as a single parcel free and clear of all easements, liens, encumbrances and claims arising since August 22, 2023, the date that the Mortgage was recorded at the Cass County Register of Deeds. The sale is subject to liens and other restrictions recorded before August 23, 2023 (recording date of mortgage), none of which are foreclosed by the Judgment of Foreclosure. 4. The sale of the Property, together with the appurtenances and improvements thereon, shall be sold under the direction of the Court by the County Clerk or its designee, including the County Sheriff, and that all

City of Dowagiac General Publication

Effective November 1, 2019, electric and/or water shut-off rules went into effect.
*If you or your spouse is in the military, you are provided certain shut-off protections pursuant to MCL 460-9C.
*During the heating season – November 1st through March 31st – residents may request 2 additional 10-day extension agreements.
*If you or a member of your household has a certified medical condition which requires electricity, shut offs may be extended or postponed an additional 21 days.
*The rules provide that during the heating season when temperatures fall below 35 degrees – November 1st through March 31st – and the cooling season when temperatures exceed 94 degrees – citizens shall not have electrical services disconnected.
*Customers may be eligible for payment assistance of electrical or water/sewer services. Contact the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) at (269) 445-0200 to obtain additional information on State Emergency Relief (SER).
*Pursuant to section 21 of 1933 PA 94, MCL 141.121, the charges for electric, water, and/or sewer service are hereby made a lien on all premises served thereby. Whenever any such charges against such premises shall be delinquent for six months, the city manager shall report the delinquencies to the council twice per year. Thereupon the council shall order publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the city of notice that all unpaid such utility charges not paid will be spread on the city's tax roll against the premises to which such utility services were supplied or furnished. If such utility charges are not paid, the city manager shall report to the tax assessing officer of the city, the fact of such delinquency, whereupon such charges shall be entered upon the next tax roll by the tax assessing officer as a charge against such premises to which such utility services were supplied or furnished, and the charges shall be collected and the lien enforced in the same manner as provided or the collection of taxes assessed upon the roll and the enforcement of the lien for the taxes.

0900 LEGALS

proceeds from the sale will be applied, after the payment of expenses of sale and the cost of this suit, for payment of the amount due and owing to Simplify and that if any surplus exist over an above the amount bid by Simplify (assuming the amount bid by Simplify is not greater than the Judgment amount plus allowable cost), that amount shall be paid into the Court for determination of the rights of other parties to this action, as to the surplus, if any. 5. Defendants shall be forever barred and foreclosed of and from all equity of redemption and claim of, in and to the Mortgaged Property, if not redeemed within six (6) months from the date of the sale. 6. That the sale shall become final, subject to the redemption period, upon an entry of an Order Conforming Sale by the Court. 7. That upon becoming final, the right, title, and interest in the Property shall vest in the grantee named in the Deed, as those rights titles and interest that existed in Defendants. Cass County Clerk Dated: July 28, 2025, Gary D. Popovits, Esq. Pezzetti, Vermetten, Popovits & Umulis, P.C. Attorneys for Plaintiff 600 E. Front Street, Suite 102 Travers City, MI 49686 (231)929-3450 W: Real Estate, LLC Group – Judicial Foreclosure (2nd Mtg) Foreclosure of Forclosure Sale-Judicial 07.26.25.wpd Ad #258013

Dowagiac Daily News: Aug. 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, Sept. 6th and 13th, 2025. **258013**

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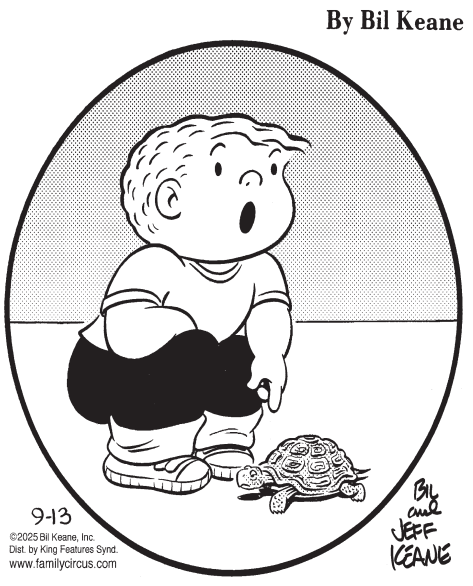

"Don't turtles ever get to go out and play?"

DENNIS THE MENACE

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ARCTIC CIRCLE

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IT'S A MINI VACATION!
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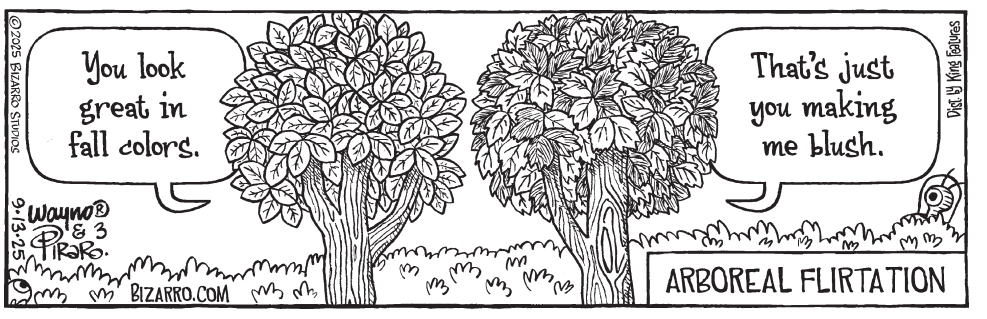

BEETLE BAILEY

I TRIED YOUR SOUP
GREG + MORT WALKER
CAN YOU SAY ANYTHING GOOD ABOUT IT?
NO FLY
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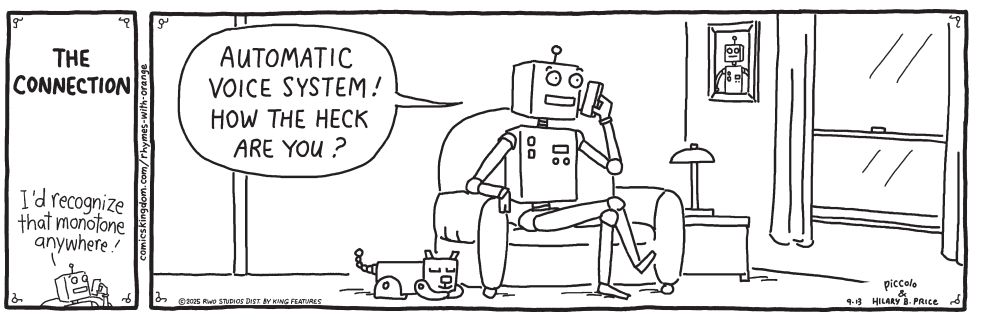
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I'd recognize that monotone anywhere!
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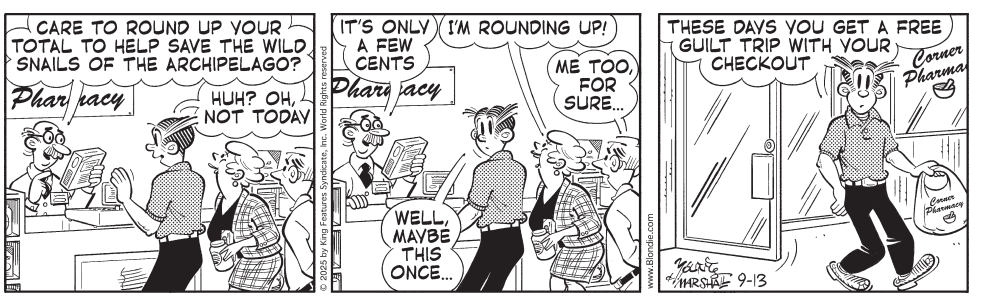
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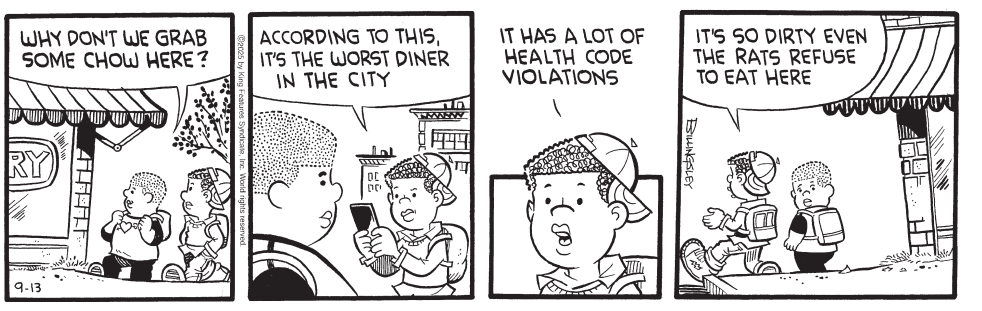
CURTIS


WHY DON'T WE GRAB SOME CHOW HERE?
9-13
ACCORDING TO THIS, IT'S THE WORST DINER IN THE CITY
IT HAS A LOT OF HEALTH CODE VIOLATIONS
IT'S SO DIRTY EVEN THE RATS REFUSE TO EAT HERE
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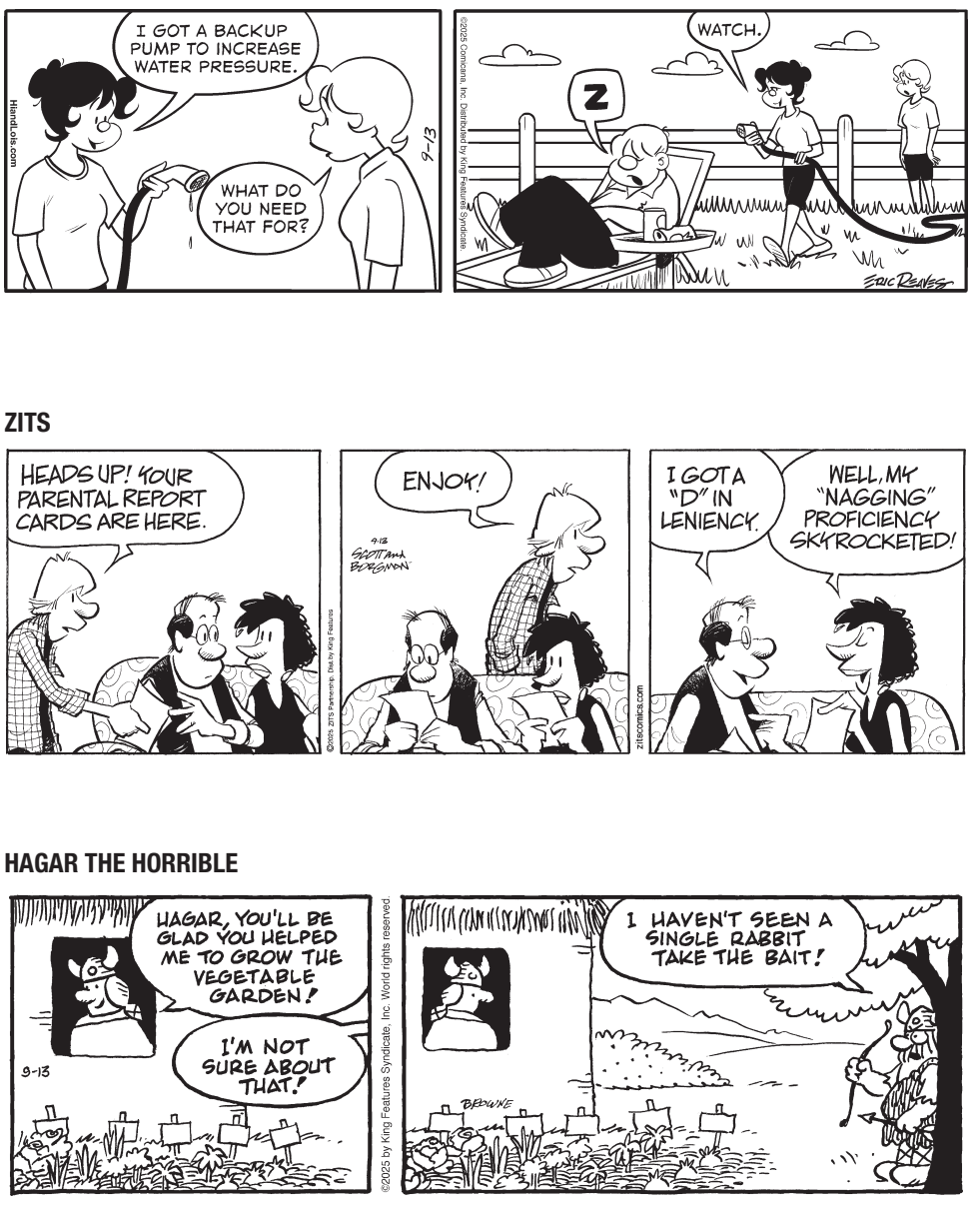
HI & LOIS



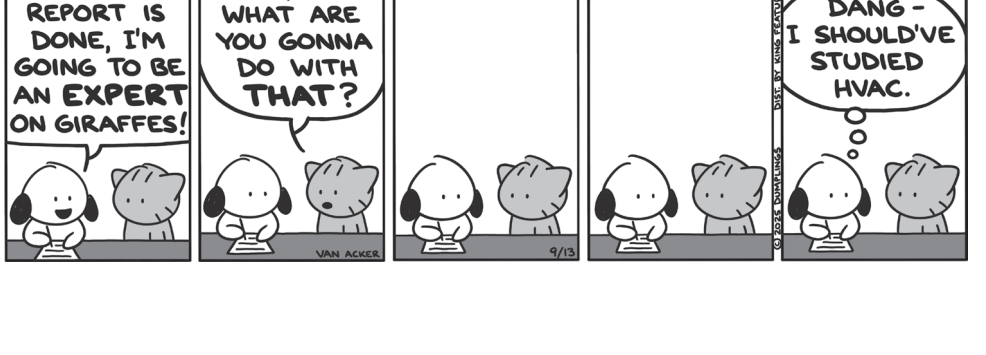
PARDON MY PLANET

LEE ©2025 Vic Lee. Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.
OH, C'MON, HONEY - YOU CAN'T TAKE THIS STUFF PERSONALLY. IT'S SATURDAY, AND YOU KNOW I ALWAYS SPEND THE WEEKEND QUESTIONING ALL OF MY LIFE CHOICES.
9-13

ZITS

HEADS UP! YOUR PARENTAL REPORT CARDS ARE HERE.
ENJOY!
9-13
SCOTT AND BERGMAN
©2025 ZITS Partnership. Dist. by King Features
I GOT A "D" IN LENIENCY.
WELL, MY "NAGGING" PROFICIENCY SKYROCKETED!
zitscomics.com

DUMPLINGS


WHEN THIS REPORT IS DONE, I'M GOING TO BE AN EXPERT ON GIRAFFES!
YEAH, BUT... WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO WITH THAT?
VAN ACKER
9/13
DANG - I SHOULD'VE STUDIED HVAC.
©2025 DUMPLINGS DIST. BY KING FEATURES

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

HAGAR, YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU HELPED ME TO GROW THE VEGETABLE GARDEN!
I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THAT.
9-13
©2025 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
I HAVEN'T SEEN A SINGLE RABBIT TAKE THE BAIT!
BROOME

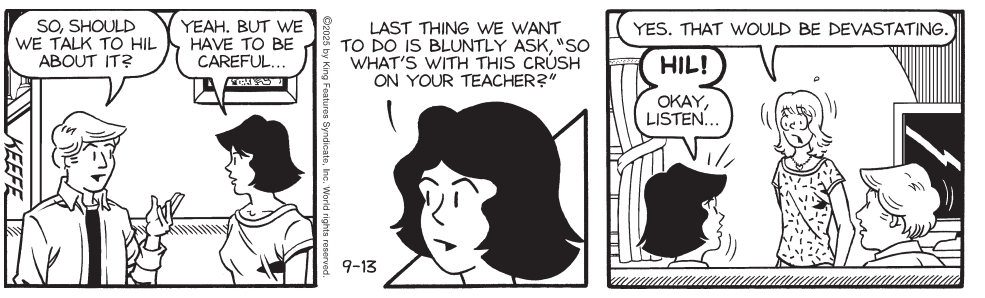
SIX CHIX

I thought this guy I met online and I had a thing... but now he's ghosted me!
I HATE when that happens! Ghosting is the WORST!
Why do they ALWAYS badmouth me?
©2025 Stephanie Ping
SIX CHIX ©2025 King Features Syndicate, Inc.
9/13

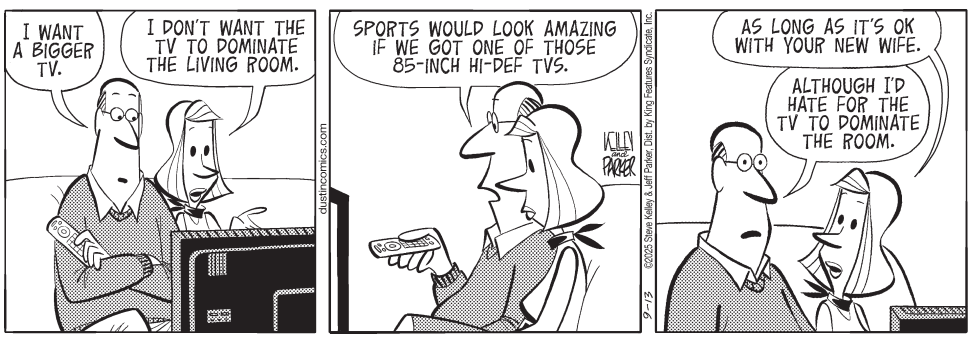
BARNEY GOOGLE AND SNUFFY SMITH

BRACE YORESELVES, FOLKS !!
OH NO !! EARTHQUAKE ?!!
JOHN ROSE
©2025 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
IT'S TIME FER TH' NEWS !!
SORTA !!
comicskingdom.com/barney-google-and-snuffy-smith

SALLY FORTH


SO, SHOULD WE TALK TO HIL ABOUT IT?
YEAH. BUT WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL...
KEEFE
©2025 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
LAST THING WE WANT TO DO IS BLUNTLY ASK, "SO WHAT'S WITH THIS CRUSH ON YOUR TEACHER?"
9-13
YES. THAT WOULD BE DEVASTATING.
HIL!
OKAY, LISTEN...

DUSTIN


I WANT A BIGGER TV.
I DON'T WANT THE TV TO DOMINATE THE LIVING ROOM.
dustincomics.com
SPORTS WOULD LOOK AMAZING IF WE GOT ONE OF THOSE 85-INCH HI-DEF TVS.
KELLY & JEFF PARKER
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9-13
AS LONG AS IT'S OK WITH YOUR NEW WIFE.
ALTHOUGH I'D HATE FOR THE TV TO DOMINATE THE ROOM.

MUTTS

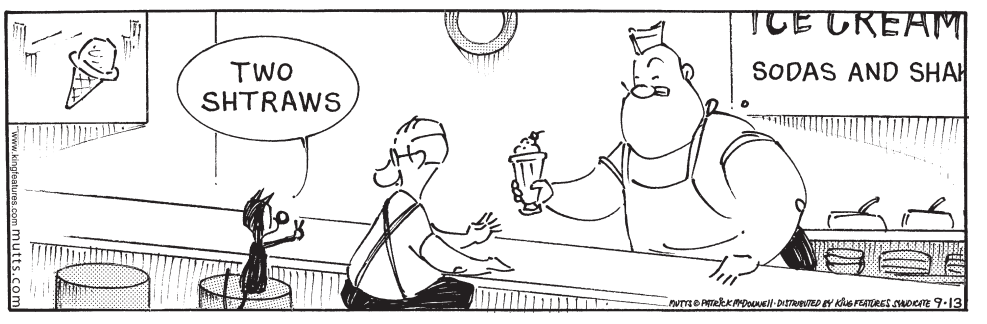

Photo provided

The Dowagiac football team saw its late-game rally fall short Friday, Sept. 5 in a 21-17 loss to Three Rivers.

Chieftains rally falls short in 21-17 loss to Three Rivers

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

THREE RIVERS — The Dowagiac football team saw its late-game rally fall short Friday, Sept. 5 in a 21-17 loss to Three Rivers.

Trailing 21-3 in the fourth quarter, Dowagiac's Cooper Szymczak scored on a 13-yard run and Skyler Vincik added a two-point conversion run to make it a 21-11 game. Tim Masterman then scored on a 2-yard run but the Chieftains failed the conversion, ultimately falling short of the win.

Three Rivers got on the board in the first quarter with a 39-yard interception return for a touchdown by Brayden Carpenter, followed by a successful extra point from Daniel Beachey.

In the second quarter, Dowagiac responded with a 23-yard field goal from Johannah McDonald. However, Three Rivers quickly answered with an 84-yard kickoff return for a touchdown by Blake Stewart, with Beachey adding the extra point. The Wildcats extended their lead in the third quarter with a 42-yard touchdown run from Ethan Moreland and a successful extra point from Jacin Selent.

Dowagiac outgained Three Rivers 180-155 in total yards.

The Chieftains (1-1) return to Chris Taylor Alumni Field next Friday to host Benton Harbor.

Photo provided

The SMC volleyball team defeated Muskegon Community College Jayhawks in four sets Tuesday at home.{/span}

SMC volleyball bests Muskegon in home opener

STAFF REPORT

DOWAGIAC — The Southwestern Michigan College Volleyball Team took down the Muskegon Jayhawks in four sets in the season home opener at the 1st Source Bank Fieldhouse on Tuesday, 25-9, 22-25, 25-23, and 25-14.

"This was a total team effort," said Head Coach Jenny Nate. "All attackers were firing, and our setters and defense did an incredible job making it possible to run our offense even when we were out of system. We came out and executed exactly what we have been working on in practice. Muskegon is always a tough opponent, but I thought we did a great job of attacking from all areas of the court using our entire team, and we got great blocks and block touches that forced some pressure on their attackers. This win was only possible because of the intensity of our daily practice and the work that all 17 of our players put in day in and day out. They challenge each other in every single drill like it is a match which is why we were able to come away with this win over Muskegon.

"We will celebrate tonight, but tomorrow we are back to business preparing to take on Ancilla next Tuesday in conference match play."

The Roadrunners are now 8-3, with the highest current win total in the entire MCCAA.

Leading serving scorers: Talan Hiemstra 21 points, 3 aces; Meah Evans 13 points, 2 aces; Carlie Ritchie 8 points; Amie Schutz 7 points, 1 ace; Ryli Burks 5 points; Reese Maas 5 points, 2 aces

Kills: Amie Schutz 18, Ryli Burks 11, Lily Kowalik 8, Maggie Arney 8, Meah Evans 3, Talan Hiemstra 2, Sophia Bachman

Blocks: Meah Evans 5, Maggie Arney 4, Talan Hiemstra 2, Lily Kowalik 2, Amie Schutz 1

Digs: Carlie Ritchie 23, Amie Schutz 13, Ryli Burks 11, Meah Evans 11, Sophia Bachman 5, Talan Hiemstra 4

Assists: Meah Evans 28, Sophia Bachman 15

Save the Date!
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Hazardous Waste & Used Tire Collection
Wednesday, September 24, 2025
3 to 6 p.m. — No appointment necessary
Cass County Road Commission
340 N. O'Keefe St.
Cassopolis, MI
Find a list of accepted items here.
HAZARDOUS WASTE

Buchanan volleyball falls to Lakeshore in 3 sets

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BUCHANAN — The Buchanan volleyball team lost to Lakeshore in three sets on Monday, bringing their overall record to 4-4. The final scores were 24-26, 20-25, and 19-25.

Gabby Carson led the Bucks with nine kills while Kenzie Boller had four. Morgan Weldy was the team's assist leader with 21.

On defense, Emily Holt had 10 digs and a team-high three aces. Finley Kehoe added seven digs.

Bears QB Williams checking his footwork and passing fundamentals before facing

By GENE CHAMBERLAIN
Associated Press

LAKE FOREST, Ill. — Chicago Bears quarterback Caleb Williams is doing his best to ward off negative thoughts after a losing start to the season.

Williams – 21 of 35 for 210 yards – couldn't beat the Minnesota Vikings on Monday night and he did more damage at times with his legs during the 27-24 loss in Ben Johnson's first game as coach of the Bears.

"There was a lot of positive that came out of that," Williams said Wednesday. "Obviously, we had negatives. Within that game, kind of how coach Johnson said, we had more negative plays than they did and we lost the game.

"It's being able to find in those moments where maybe a drive goes bad and it's being able to find those ways to come back together and go out the next drive and be efficient and do what we did in the first half."

Williams started 10 for 10 but struggled to the finish, exactly the opposite of the Vikings' J.J. McCarthy. In his first start, McCarthy threw two fourth-quarter touchdown passes and ran one in to spark the rally from a 17-6 fourth-quarter deficit.

A key moment came when Williams overthrew wide receiver DJ Moore wide open running deep to the pylon.

"It's frustrating because like I said after the game, you did everything up to that point right and then you miss a pass," Williams said. "That's something that we practice on, something that we get after and something that I'm going to keep getting after, keep correcting.

"Passes that I feel that I typically don't miss in those moments and situations, especially with some of the passes being what they were and how wide open, you miss and you move on. You correct and you find ways to get better."

Williams' throws to other open receivers went into the ground while others sailed wide during his second-half errant stretch. It caused worries about the next game Sunday, when the Bears face Johnson's former team at Detroit.

"I think some of it, the coming in spurts aspect of it, I think it came from something as simple as the footwork and just being on top of that and being smooth with that," Williams said. "Even if the footwork was right, it's just being smooth with it and not being hesitant and letting it rip.

"I think that's always something that quarterbacks need to have in their mind and something I always try to have in my mind is be decisive. The decisiveness always wins."

Johnson labels it a case of simple fundamentals with his feet in the throwing motion.

"When he was doing it properly, the ball came out on time," Johnson said. "I thought that he was delivering accurate footballs. But it's still not 100%t all of the time, and that's something that we're working through."

One thing Williams did do right was scramble. The website NFL NextGen Stats clocked Williams running 20.45 mph on on run, reportedly the NFL's eighth-fastest time for Week 1.

Johnson wouldn't mind seeing some of Williams' speed directed at getting the team in and out of the huddle. The Bears had 12 penalties including five pre-snap issues. They also burned a couple of timeouts to avoid delay-of-game penalties.

"We'll continue to speed up that process, in terms of breaking the huddle, from there on out," Johnson said.

A key is staying positive, Williams said. They've only played one game under Johnson.

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BEACON HEALTH SYSTEM

Edwardsburg XC wins Fennville Open title

By MAXWELL HARDEN
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FENNVILLE — Edwardsburg and Niles cross country teams competed at the 65th Fennville Open Saturday, Sept. 6 at Fenn Valley Winery, with the Eddies taking first place as several runners from both schools delivered strong performances.

In the men's varsity race, Edwardsburg had three runners finish in the top 10.

George Scupham led the Eddies with a third-place finish and a time of 16:34.01. He was followed by Ethan Ferguson in fifth place with a time of 17:03.52 and Riley Szalai in eighth place with a time of 17:41.88. Gavin Ayers secured ninth place, finishing in 17:46.78.

John Brickley was the top finisher for Niles, securing sixth place with a time of 17:05.21. Other notable finishers for Niles included Miguel Rodriguez in 24th place (19:18.17), Theodore Arseneau in 27th place (19:23.07), and Liam Pesce in 35th place (19:45.92).

In the girls varsity race, Edwardsburg's Georgia Babcock finished third with a time of 20:26.09, and Grace Leman placed fourth with a time of 20:47.18. Giselle Babcock finished 13th with a time of 23:29.06, and Annika VanBuren placed 14th with a time of 23:31.21.

For Niles, Lena Coulston led the team with a sixth-place finish and a personal record time of 22:12.36. She was followed by Claire DevlescHoward in seventh place with a time of 22:20.43. Other runners for Niles included Haili Martz in 15th place (23:40.05) and Morgan Hopper in 16th place (23:49.81).

Photo provided

The Edwardsburg cross country team took first place at the 65th Fennville Open last week.

Brandywine falls to Watervliet in thriller

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

WATERVLIET — Watervliet won a 32-31 football thriller over Brandywine on Friday for its first win of the season.

The Panthers led 18-13 at halftime and 32-19 after three quarters, then held off a Brandywine rally for the victory.

Quarterback Caleb Jewell led Watervliet (1-1) with 139 yards passing and three touchdowns.

Ashton Coleman caught two touchdown passes for a total of 95 yards, and Jayden Brassard added a 33-yard touchdown reception.

Dimetric White powered the running game with 16 carries for 105 yards, and Jewell added 11 runs for 45 yards. Cole Getz returned a kickoff 82 yards for a touchdown.

Watervliet coach Kevin Eastman, who picked up his first varsity coaching win, credited defensive linemen Wyatt Macmillan and Deandre Rose for providing pressure up front and helping the Panthers force two turnovers.

Kaeden Warfield had a big game for Brandywine (0-2), rushing 27 times for 186 yards and four touchdowns. Nylen Goins and Tanner Inman added touchdowns for the Bobcats.

While Brandywine Head Coach Jeff Miller said the team ultimately left too many plays on the field to win the game, he said the players' emotional response to the loss was encouraging.

"When you invest and come up just short, it hurts," he said. "But the fact they're investing in it means we will continue to improve. We need to keep being everyday guys and get more consistent. We could not be more proud of our kids and how they represented Brandywine."

Brandywine hosted Saugatuck on Friday. Visit Leaderpub.com for results.

Buchanan earns 38-14 road win over Coloma

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

COLOMA —The Buchanan football team moved to 2-0 with a 38-14 road win over Coloma on Friday night.

Buchanan had 292 total yards of offense, with 211 coming from rushing and 81 from passing.

After an early Coloma interception return for a touchdown in the first quarter, Buchanan took control in the second. Lucas Zeiger connected with Owen Thompson for two touchdown passes, a 17-yarder and a 24-yarder. Both touchdowns were followed by successful two-point conversions.

In the third quarter, Zeiger threw his third touchdown pass of the night, a 30-yard completion to RJ Scoggin, which also included a two-point conversion. Cornelius scored a 3-yard rushing touchdown in the fourth quarter, followed by a two-point conversion. Zeiger capped off the Bucks' scoring with an 8-yard touchdown run.

Zeiger completed 4 of 8 passes for 74 yards and three touchdowns and one interception and rushed for 18 yards and one touchdown. Cy Carlin also saw the field at quarterback and completed 2 of 5 passes for seven yards and one interception.

Cornelius led the rushing attack with 170 yards on 20 carries and a touchdown. Thompson was the leading receiver with three catches for 40 yards and two touchdowns. On defense, RJ Scoggin recorded an interception.

Coloma's two scores came from an interception return in the first quarter and a rushing touchdown in the second.

The Bucks will host Battle Creek Pennfield next week at Memorial Field in their home opener.

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